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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

POLITICS OF FRANCE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

POLITICS OF FRANCE,

AND

THEIR PROGRESS SINCE THE LAST SUMMER:

MADE IN A JOURNEY FROM SPA TO PARIS DURING THE AUTUMN OF 1791.

By T. F. HILL.

Tamen Novus eſt, Viator politicus!

Jo. Sar. Epist.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TRAVELLERS who formerly visited France, September
either to investigate living manners, or explore the remains of former times; nay, even that less meditating race, who went thither in search of mere amusement; have all had their attention turned at present in that country, to the study of politics; a study which they almost find necessary, to secure their personal safety: and the same motives that have influenced others, incited me also to observe the various phenomena presented by the intellectual volcano, now in eruption there. After staying a month at Spa, where the afflux of the emigrant French nobility had filled that scene of amusement beyond the example of any former period, I proceeded through Liege on an excursion, up the Meuse, and down the Moselle and the Rhine, as far as Dusseldorp, whence I crossed to Aix la Chapelle and back tó Liege; from thence I came strait to Paris. The beauties of landscape possessed by that portion of the course of the Rhine through which my journey lay, have long rendered it famous: the vallies

September of the Meuſe and the Moſelle, though leſs celebrated, are ſcarcely leſs intereſting; the ſcenes of the Meuſe reſemble the ſtile of our Derbyſhire, but on a more magnificent ſcale; the Moſelle is wilder and more rocky, though its rocks are indeed covered with vines; but their forms have yielded leſs to the moulding hand of human induſtry; the vale is generally narrower, leſs peopled, and more romantic. The city of Treves on the Moſelle will eſpecially reward the reſearches of the antiquarian, who may take the trouble to viſit it: the remoteneſs of its ſituation from any of the great roads of the Continent has hitherto prevented its being generally known to contain more reſpectable monuments of the ſplendor of antient Rome, than any other place in northern Europe. Theſe objects induced me to undertake the circuit above mentioned; and I returned, highly gratified with the expedition.

The firſt remarkable veſtige of the reſiſtance to eſtabliſhed powers, now ſo much the faſhion in theſe countries, occurred to me in the neighbourhood of Dinant, where the late depredatory war was proſecuted between the Imperialiſts and the Belgic inſurgents: Dinant was blockaded for twelve or thirteen months, and ſcarcely even proviſions were ſuffered to enter it. Our countryman, Cuyler, has left behind him a name famous for many deeds of uſeleſs bravery; not, indeed, untainted with reproaches of cruelty, yet, perhaps, eaſily defended by the neceſſity of preſerving his unpaid followers in ſpirits. The lines raiſed by the inſurgents remain unde-

ſtroyed on the point of a hill over the Meuſe; a September
low rampart of looſe earth, now almoſt exempt from human footſteps; and the dog who followed me ſcratched down, unregarded, the labours of aſſembled armies.

If report and popular belief may be credited, this province has ſuffered ſeverely by the return of the train of authority. The diſtrict of Namur has been afflicted during the laſt Summer and Autumn with an epidemical complaint, ſo violent as to kill, it is ſaid, not leſs than ten or eleven people daily in the city alone: many neighbouring towns alſo participated; Florennes eſpecially is aſſerted to have loſt at leaſt a tenth of its inhabitants. The diſtemper appeared at firſt as a putrid fever; but later in the ſeaſon aſſumed the form of a dyſentery, preceded, however, by violent ſenſations of diſeaſe; in which ſhape it remained to the beginning of Winter. Now the cauſe of this complaint was pretty generally attributed to a taint brought by the Auſtrian ſoldiery, at preſent in Garriſon there, from the South of Hungary, and the fatal vicinity of the Turks: ſome perſons, however, rather referred it to the nature of the climate itſelf; though ſtill, perhaps, a conſequence of the concourſe of the ſoldiery.

The danger of viſiting France was loudly proclaimed by popular rumour; yet, although the courſe of the Meuſe and the Moſelle might expoſe me to ſuſpicion, as leading me through many of the moſt important frontier towns of that country, I was not deterred from entering it. Never-

September theleſs, even as it were at the gates, coming along the river in the public barge from Dinant to Givet, a young lady, and an Abbé who attended her, returning from the country to Givet, told diſmal tales of want of ſubordination, quarrels, and murders, among the ſoldiery in garriſon. I met with no diſagreeable adventures, however, either relative to myſelf, or thoſe connected with me, till I was quitting the country. I was aſked, indeed, for paſſports at the gates of Givet; and as I had none, in conſequence of having been aſſured at Liege that they were unneceſſary, I was conducted to the Municipality, the name given to the new courts of police; but on finding no appearances of evil intentions, the Magiſtrates readily ſupplied me with them: though this entrance of France is, perhaps, one of the moſt eſſential of any. I only found this difference from former cuſtoms; that, inſtead of obtaining them from a Nobleman and General, *Commandant de la Ville*, adorned with gold lace, with ribbons, and the accoutrements of war, receiving me in a ſpacious ſaloon dreſſed in ſilk and gold, I was conducted for them to the ſhops of peaceful tradeſmen, the officers of the Municipality, who behaved to me, however, with as much real civility as any Count or Marquis could have ſhown. We met on the river two barges loaded with furniture, of people quitting the kingdom; and I was generally told, of prodigious emigration: but I alſo ſaw ſeveral waggons filled with trunks, apparently belonging to thoſe who entered it. I found it too true that the coin had diſappeared,

peared; and the people complained of the want of commerce; a complaint I heard frequently repeated afterwards: yet certainly, even in the neighbourhood of Givet, I ſaw many more new houſes than France uſed in times paſt to exhibit; and the inns in general were evidently improved. It may be not improper to add, that I had not ſeen France, the very neighbourhood of Calais excepted, for ſix years before. September

Every Government partakes more or leſs of the principles of arbitrary power; and muſt ever do ſo, if human experience may be truſted. It being a cuſtom introduced under the preſent Government of France; an imitation, indeed, of the antients and the Orientals, but certainly a moſt uſeful one; to affix their laws to ſome public place in every town; they become thus liable to the inſpection of every body: nor was it without ſurprize, in a country ſo renowned for its newly-acquired liberty, that I ſaw orders among them, iſſued by the Municipality, for the citizens to ſpecify all their poſſeſſions upon oath within a certain time; a meaſure highly invidious, and which the moſt deſpotic Sovereign would hardly have dared to adopt. There is a tyranny of Republics, as well as of Monarchies! It appeared to be in the ſame arbitrary ſpirit, that the decrees of the Aſſembly declare all mines more than one hundred feet below the ſurface to be public property: though this ſeems a deſpotiſm rather conſequent on the principles of the old, than the new, ſyſtem. However, the riſking ſuch laws ſeems a manifeſt evidence, that the preſent Government

eſteems

September eſteems itſelf ſecure of ſupport and obedience. The exordium to theſe laws ſtruck my eye: *Louis par la Grace de Dieu, et la Loi conſtitutionelle de l'Etat, Roi des François:* the old empty parade of kingly pride, that the ſource of regal authority is derived from the Deity alone, is no longer ſuffered to remain even in the form of a vague title.

I arrived at Givet the laſt day of September; the old Aſſembly was diſſolving, and the new one, lately choſen, juſt going to meet; I then ſeemed to feel an apparent ſatisfaction in the new ſyſtem pervading the majority of the people. Yet I have ſince learned, that Givet is one of the frontier towns moſt decidedly favourable to the Ariſtocracy; and it might ſo happen, that the people I then ſaw were the part moſt friendly to the Revolution. It is to be remembered, however, that this particular period was, perhaps, the moſt brilliant and favourable the new Government has yet enjoyed; the Conſtitution was juſt formed, and accepted by the King; the conduct of the firſt Aſſembly in the latter part of its exiſtence, had been diſtinguiſhed by many features of dignity; the new Aſſembly poſſeſſed that propitious predilection which the people are ſo good as ever to beſtow on new Governors; the preſent ſyſtem was arrived at its apex.

The fortifications were univerſally repairing, and that in the moſt ſolid and expenſive manner; every place was filled with ſoldiers. Givet and Charlemont, its almoſt impregnable neighbour, had regular troops; but moſt of the other towns I paſt had

had national guards. Even the very roads were covered with ſoldiers, with baggage waggons, with ammunition, and all the preparatives of war. It was juſt at this moment that the almoſt total departure of the officers had taken place: but the event then appeared to me as an advantage to the new ſyſtem, rather than the contrary; for by this means its enemies became manifeſt, and the army purified; the benefit was alſo obtained, of being able to raiſe the ſubalterns, generally known to be favourable to it; nor did the Aſſembly omit to profit by theſe circumſtances, for I found an expreſs law juſt publiſhed, which regulated the number and mode of raiſing the ſubalterns; whilſt a certain part of the deficiency was to be replaced by an adequate proportion of well-affected citizens, and the army thus rendered ſecure and fit to be truſted. The opinion I then formed I have certainly not had any ſubſequent cauſe to change. Every appearance perſuaded me, that there was no reaſon to expect any new Revolution could ſuddenly happen. September

I left Givet on the firſt of October, and proceeded up the banks of the Meuſe, through ſcenes exquiſitely romantic, by Revin to Charleville and Mezieres, a journey only to be performed on foot, or on horſeback. The arts of human fortification had diſappeared, among the enormous ramparts here raiſed by the hand of Nature herſelf, cut into inacceſſible precipices, flooded with unfordable inundations, diſpoſed in unaſſailable paſſes, and hung with pathleſs woods, to divide men for ever from each other. At Charleville and Mezieres,

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Seplember I returned from the peaceful retreats of untrodden foreſts to plains and cities, and military preparation. The motives which had hitherto induced me to follow the leſs-beaten paths on the banks of the Meuſe ceaſing here, I made an agreement with a carriage-keeper of Mezieres to carry me to Metz. The firſt place of note to which my road led me was Sedan, diſtinguiſhed by the birth of the great Turenne. It is a town ſtrongly fortified, and ſtill conſiderable for its woollen manufactures. There appeared in it a marked attachment to the new Government; for in ſpite of the lamented decay of commerce, in ſpite of the diſappearance of the coin, an obeliſk of conſiderable ſize had lately been erected to adorn the great place of the town, which exhibited on a globe upon its ſummit the motto of freedom, *Vivre libre ou mourir:* Liberty or Death! Here I ſaw advertiſed, an aſſociation of the principal merchants, to remedy the defects of the national paper money; which was ſaid in the advertiſement to have produced a total diſappearance of the current coin; a fact of which I had afterwards ſufficient demonſtration. Already I had found the carriage-keeper agreed to carry me at a cheaper rate, if I paid him in money; and at the inns, the ſame mode of payment afforded conſiderable advantage. My driver ſhewed me ſome of the aſſignats, the firſt I had occaſion to ſee: they are made of thick paper, in the form of cards, with a circular impreſſion of the head of the King, like the print of a halfpenny, in the center; and all payable to the bearer at the office in Paris: they

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are of various different ſums, as low as five livres, but none leſs: their effect has excluded money every where, and they are current over all the country in its ſtead. At this period in Lorraine the large aſſignats loſt ſixteen, and thoſe of five livres fourteen in the hundred. October

I found the national cockade no longer univerſal in this country; many, however, wore it; but the zeal of patriotiſm was no longer ſufficient to render it here obligatory, or univerſal: I never had occaſion to wear it myſelf till my arrival at Paris.

From Sedan I came to Montmedy, rendered famous by the pretended intention of Louis XVI., to chuſe it as his reſidence after his flight in July; it conſiſts of two ſeparate towns; one in the valley; the other on a lofty hill, wholly iſolate, and apparently uncommanded, the propoſed abode of the Monarch. This hill riſes like a cone in a valley of great breadth, without any other comparative ſummit in its neighbourhood; the mountains which border the valley are diſtant. It was always fortified; but ſince the attempt of the King the fortifications are ſaid to be much increaſed; a fact which I do not doubt, though I had no opportunity to verify it. Before that attempt no new works were undertaken, and the inhabitants attribute this neglect to the deſigns of Bouillé. The place where the King was ſtopt is ſcarcely more than ten leagues diſtant.

From Mezieres and Sedan to Metz I found one of thoſe great roads for which France is diſtinguiſhed; though certainly it can only be deemed a

October croſs way, and not one of the high roads of the kingdom. I alſo found inns at ſeveral places, which would be deemed good in England itſelf; at Jarny eſpecially, near Conflans, the inn where I lay had rooms as clean and neat, and united every other convenience as completely, even as many of the firſt in our own country; nor was its merit attended with impoſition. Between Montmedy and Metz it may deſerve remark, that I paſſed through Eſtaing and Conflans; two towns whoſe names have been borne by two famous maritime Commanders of France; of whom one may be numbered among the moſt fatal enemies of the Britiſh navy in the laſt war, the other fell a victim to the ſuperiority of its arms in that which preceded.

Inſtead of finding travelling in France more troubleſome than formerly, as Report had repreſented it abroad, I found it far leſs ſo: I never was aſked for paſſports, except at Givet, where I received, inſtead of giving them; and the vermin of the offices of the cuſtoms, that plague of the harmleſs traveller, who uſed to infeſt the entrance of almoſt every town in France, like the Gorgons and Harpies at the mouth of Tartarus, are now expelled to the confines; their gloomy dens at the gates are ſhut and empty. The name of Engliſhman has all the weight it ever poſſeſſed; or rather a great additional one, connected with the newly adopted ideas of liberty. The French, whoſe inſipid levity had formerly diſguſted me, appeared from what I had then ſeen, ſo reſpectable, ſo rationally patriotic; that, prejudiced

diced already in favour of the Government of Liberty, I almoſt dared to hope the common good was really become the aim of every individual: their character ſeemed to have acquired that freedom and dignity which was wanting to compleat it: nor was the ear ſo often ſtunned with the ſenſeleſs and unceaſing chatter of French foppery, as it had been in the days of haughty Ariſtocracy. I fancied that all were united in a determination to maintain the advantages of the preſent ſyſtem; that merchants combined to give credit to the nation; ſoldiers to defend, and peaſants and labourers to ſupport it. Subſequent experience has indeed convinced me, that the warmth of a firſt impreſſion had heated my imagination beyond the limits of ſober truth; yet I ſtill remain ſatisfied, that the Revolution has already been of eſſential advantage to the intellectual character, as well as to the political regimen of France; and I ſtill believe, as I did then, that the attempts of the Refugees to invade the country will never be able to reſtore them to their old privileges; though I would not, perhaps, ſay now, as on that occaſion, that they might attempt, with equal eaſe and equal judgement, to invade the Moon: alſo it ſtill appears to me probable, that France may hereafter become a far mightier nation than the world has ever yet ſeen it; even the mere vigour communicated to a people, by ſo ſevere a political ſhock uncontrolled by the arm of foreign power, will be ſufficient to animate it for greater enterpriſes, to call ſuperior minds into action. October

October It was at Metz that I was induced to form ſuch favourable ideas of the Revolution. I heard the public affairs debated with ſo much ſeeming attention to the general benefit; there appeared ſuch a deſire to obtain from the impartial compariſon of ideas, thoſe lights which nothing elſe can give; that I almoſt conceived myſelf tranſported into the Republic of Plato. Yet even while there, I had reaſon to ſee; that the old prejudices were in no wiſe eradicated, notwithſtanding all the oſtenſible attempts of the National Aſſembly for this purpoſe. Metz being one of the few places in France where Jews had always been permitted to reſide, I found them ſtill treated with the ſame blind contempt and undiſtinguiſhing ridicule that they formerly experienced: they alſo received an additional ſtigma from the trade of money jobbing, almoſt excluſively purſued by them; a trade to which men have ever manifeſted an unalterable averſion, whether under the name of Uſury of old, or Money Jobbing now. Yet the commerce in actual wealth, and its repreſentative, money, is as neceſſary and as juſt as any other; it is merely its abuſe which can render it blamable; and nothing encourages this abuſe ſo much as the affixing a public ſtigma on its negotiators: yet this is the general caſe in France; it equally exiſts at Paris, where the trade is by no means confined to the Jews. No nation has ever had more juſt ideas on this ſubject than our own; and they are ſupported by the reſpectable character of our bankers.

Metz

Metz ſtill preſerves its antient military air, and ſwarms with troops. The ordinary of the hotel where I lodged was frequented by many of the officers, and by ſome alſo in civil employments. Politics of every kind, in direct contradiction to the cuſtom of former times, were the general topics of converſation. Among other ſubjects of this ſort, an officer native of Provence, made ſome ingenious, but, perhaps, not ſolid, remarks on the ſituation of the Corſairs of Barbary, who, as it is well known, owe almoſt their whole exiſtence to the culpable permiſſion, or even to the ſtill more culpable encouragement, afforded them by England and France, in order to repreſs by their means, the commerce of the ſubordinate States in the Mediterranean. This officer, who ſeemed to have paid conſiderable attention to the ſubject, with which alſo Provence, his country, is eſpecially connected, poſitively aſſerted, that, whatever might be the caſe with reſpect to France, England would certainly profit by the annihilation of the Corſairs, or by obliging them to make peace with the Italian States; becauſe the Italian ſailors, working much cheaper than the French, would have the commerce of the Levant fall into their hands; and, being obliged to fetch the materials of commerce from England, would benefit the commerce and manufactures of England greatly. But though I eſteem the ſupport given by France and England to be a ſcandal and opprobrium to both nations, yet I ſee not our advantage here ſo clearly; ſince I know not what intereſt would oblige the Italians to October

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October fetch the materials of commerce from us rather than from France, to which they are ſo much nearer; ſeeing alſo, that the French manufactures are even better approved in the Levant than ours; nor do I know what would prevent them from producing theſe materials in a ſhort time even at home.

From Metz I proceeded to Thionville, the frontier town of France on this ſide; a town whoſe fortifications are on a very great and extenſive ſcale; and its ſituation, on a flat, having no hills within a mile or half a league, ſeems to render it very defenſible. Here, on quitting France, I found the firſt inconvenience as a traveller, ariſing from the preſent political troubles of the kingdom. The total diſappearance of current coin, in conſequence of the introduction of paper money, has induced the National Aſſembly to paſs a decree, poſitively and rigorouſly forbidding the conveyance of French money out of the kingdom: an invidious and uſeleſs regulation, which can neither increaſe the proportionate value of paper, nor the quantity of coin current in the kingdom; ſince the inferior price of paper, and its almoſt equal utility for the purpoſes of traffic, muſt inevitably expel all coin out of currency. But the orders of Government for this purpoſe were ſo ſtrict; that many, of the emigrants eſpecially, had had large ſums in caſh taken from them on quitting the kingdom, and been driven into foreign countries without a crown to pay their expences: the money was ſeized by the officers of the police. I was conducted from

the gate of the town under a guard to the cuſtom houſe; but having taken care not to be charged with any conſiderable quantity of the fatal metals, I was permitted to depart, after a ſearch not unattended with politeneſs. At Sirck, the laſt town I paſſed in France, my treatment was more unpleaſant: ſome perſon, whom it was not thought fit to allow to quit the kingdom, had been ſtopped there the morning I came; I met him returning on horſeback in the midſt of ſoldiers to Thionville: this accident had rendered the guards more ſuſpicious: I was dragged to the Municipality in ſpite of a paſſport from Thionville, and the cuſtom-houſe officers ſubjected me to an inſolent and inconvenient ſearch of my baggage in the open air. I conceived, however, that the greater unpoliteneſs at Sirck was in ſome meaſure a conſequence of the national character of the people; at Thionville all were French; but at Sirck the inhabitants were already ſo decidedly German, that few even underſtood the French language. October

I ſaw a party of the national guards receiving orders on the glacis of the fortifications of Thionville: their Commander began by aſking them ſome queſtion, which I did not hear, but to which they anſwered by a general acclamation, *Oui! Oui!* I ſuſpect he aſked if they choſe to obey him, or obſerve military duty. The anſwer, to whatever it might allude, ſeemed to be given with a ſpirit of union and enthuſiaſm which animated me. He then reprehended them for dirt in their barracks, and threatened future defects of this ſort with immediate

October mediate puniſhment. In their manœuvres they certainly were extremely defective; even their very cloathing was greatly irregular, ſeveral among this very ſmall number ſtill retaining their civil dreſſes of tinkers and taylors: ſome alſo ſeemed too old to commence the trade of ſoldiers: but a little time and experience will remedy the moſt material of theſe defects; the ſpirit of enthuſiaſm will ſupply the reſt: their very drums ſeemed to me to ſpeak the voice of liberty and equal government; for certainly it is juſt, that thoſe ſhould have a right to bear arms, whoſe defence is the principal end of ſociety.

I could not help obſerving, that I ſaw but one Monk during all this route through France; a few departing premonſtratenſes excepted, who were preparing to quit the rich Abbey of Val Dieu near Mezieres on the Meuſe.

It was believed in all this part of France, ſpite of every appearance to the contrary, that I was a refugee quitting the country, though I had a ſervant with me who ſpoke only Engliſh: and it deſerves to be farther added, that I frequently obtained reſpect from the character. I was here on the immediate road to Coblentz. The ſame opinion of me alſo continued to prevail after I quitted France. At Reimyche, a ſmall town on the Moſelle, belonging to the Duchy of Luxembourg, where, for the purpoſe of dining, I ſtopped the boat that brought me from Sirck; the woman of the inn conſidering me as a refugee, and commiſerating me as ſuch, moſt civilly obliged me, though even the boat-

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men were ſtrangers to her, to accept the loan of one of her ſheets as a covering for my boat; which, indeed, defended me from an afternoon's rain, that would otherwiſe have wet me moſt thoroughly. I arrived late in the evening, at the little town of Grevenmacheren; and was conducted to a moſt wretched kind of lodging houſe, already almoſt filled with French officers, who ſwarmed in the whole place, living on hope and ſoupmeager. Theſe unfortunate adherents of more eſſential intereſts, complained grievouſly of poverty: they told me; that, when they firſt came out of France, ſoon after the Revolution, they ſpent the money they had brought with them, freely; expecting the affair would be of ſhort duration: but it has laſted ſo much longer than they ſuppoſed, that they are now without money and live wretchedly, as indeed I ſaw. They therefore expreſſed their hopes, that ſome terms of compromiſe might be adopted this winter. I alſo found the people of the country tired of them becauſe of their poverty; and behaving to them with the inſolence which haughty ſuperiority ever ſhows to needy dependants: this was even more conſpicuous in the behaviour of thoſe who were in office, than in that of the vulgar: an indication that the Government was not very favourable to them. October

I found a military guard at the gates of Treves as though it was a garriſon town or fortified place; and a ſoldier, with a ſhowy helmet on his head, was ſent with me from thence to the officers of the main guard on the great place of Treves, where my

October name and buſineſs were demanded; a precaution now adopted in all towns of this neighbourhood, in conſequence of the influx of the emigrants; of whom there are many at preſent, and ſome even of conſequence, at Treves; for Treves, under the ſame Sovereign as Coblentz, participates of its viſitants. In deſcending the Moſelle to the latter town, the firſt ſymptoms of the refugees appeared at a village where I dined, about three leagues above Coblentz: I ſaw them walking acroſs the fields; and watching my boat, as ſuppoſing it to contain ſome of their companions: many of them had contracted for lodgings in the village during the winter, as well as in other villages near: they had wiſhed to reſide at the inn where I dined; but the landlord refuſed, telling them, that though he ſhould be glad to board them, he wanted his rooms for paſſengers, and would not let them to lodgers; they are therefore to lodge, as he ſays, in other houſes of the village, and eat with him.

The nearer I came to Coblentz, the more the number of the French increaſed. I was received by a guard at the gates, as I had been at Treves: but I was ſomewhat ſurprized to find myſelf conducted here, not to a German, but to a French officer: who, by a ſingular hazard, happened to have been my companion in the packet boat from Dover to Oſtend: he recognized me as ſoon as I was introduced, otherwiſe I had forgotten him. The reaſon aſſigned for this kind of abdication of ſovereignty of the Elector at Coblentz, was, that the French leaders might immediately become ac-

quainted with all thoſe of their own nation who arrived there; and indeed alſo with all thoſe of other nations: that they might be aware both of their friends and their enemies. October

On the road I had been told romantic tales, of the difficulty of procuring lodging at Coblentz, and of the prices to be paid for them: yet my ears were ſaluted even in the ſtreets, with the cries of women offering them; a proof, indeed, of the frequent demand for them; but alſo a demonſtration that there were ſome vacant. I procured an apartment at the poſt-houſe, a principal inn of the town; where one of the daughters, among other talents, has taken pains to acquire the knowledge of our language. The number of French emigrants at Coblentz, however, was great: by computation about four or five thouſand, in that place and the neighbouring villages. Coblentz may be eſteemed their head quarters; but they are diſperſed over all the frontiers of France, from Tournay to Chambery: they are almoſt perpetually paſſing from place to place, at leaſt the lower ſort do ſo; for the purpoſe, I fancy, of aggrandiſing their apparent number and importance. I ſupped the evening of my arrival, with ſome of theſe Ubiquitaries juſt arrived; they had travelled on foot, and looked dirty, poor, and ragged. Though by principle, as a politician, no great friend to their cauſe; I could not help, as a man, feeling pity for their ſufferings. In every public place of the town, the concourſe of the emigrants was prodigious: but the ferry or floating bridge over the

October Rhine, by the crouds collected during its delays, ſeemed to afford the beſt ſituation for reviewing them: it exhibited a motley ſcene of beggars and ſharpers; thoſe who were once rich and noble, reduced to rags and poverty; and adventurers who had riſen from nothing, converted into ſoldiers and noblemen. A friend of mine was ſurprized to recognize in this place an adventurer, whom he had ſeen at Rome ſome few years before; calling himſelf here a Chevalier; aſſuming airs of importance; and talking, perhaps, indeed, not without foundation, of his familiarity with the Ducheſſes and Princeſſes of the emigration. Even our own country was not without its repreſentatives; eſpecially from among thoſe, to whom the inſurrection in Brabant had not been ſo favourable as they hoped: I even ſaw the Coronets of England on the road to the reſidence of the Conte d'Artois.

It ought, however, to be remembered, that the French emigration conſiſts almoſt excluſively of men; among the numbers at Coblentz, there were ſcarcely ten women; the majority of the emigrants appeared to be officers, and unmarried: of thoſe who have families, the greater number have left them in France; ſome alſo were left at Aix la Chapelle, ſome in Italy and other places. Thus the emigration was proportionally much more important, than if it had been more mixed. Women are an heavy weight in the fields of war: the finances of theſe knights errant, each of whom bore almoſt all his own expences, were unequal to their tranſportation. Calonne was the ſole man of wealth among the refugees;

fugees; and rumour ſaid, that this was the only cir- October
cumſtance which gave him reputation amongſt them: certainly they treated him in private, whether juſtly or unjuſtly it matters not, as a traitor to his country, and even as a man void of ſolid political abilities; but whom their peculiar ſituation had obliged them to adopt.

They were very actively preparing for war, at the period of my viſit to Coblentz. I have already mentioned, the ſingularity of the appointment of a French officer to recognize all ſtrangers who paſſed through this town: when any new French of the party appeared, their names were immediately entered into the liſts of the anti-revolution; and moſt of them preſently enrolled themſelves in ſome regiment: the whole body being diſtributed into different corps for action. One circumſtance was unfortunate; that they were all gentlemen officers, and no gentlemen ſoldiers. The officer in the direction at Coblentz, my companion in the Oſtend packet, aſſured me: that having been then appointed to the charge about a fortnight, he had never been able to quit his room, ſo great was the importunity of buſineſs: he enrolled not leſs than five or ſix hundred ſtrangers every day, almoſt all officers of the army. They were at that time renewing the regiment of guards, and forming a body of muſqueteers for the Conte d'Artois. The number of emigrants was then eſteemed to amount to about forty thouſand: it has probably been doubled ſince. All their efforts, however, ſtruck me, as vain pretences

to

October to actual ſtrength and eſtabliſhment; calculated merely for temporary motives, and to delude their followers: nor have I yet been induced to think otherwiſe.

Among the diſtinguiſhed characters in emigration at Coblentz when I paſſed through it, I have already mentioned Calonne and the Conte d'Artois, who, together with Monſieur, were all attended by their families: Marſhal Broglio was alſo there, and the famous Marquis de Bouillé. The Prince of Naſſau, the Ruſſian Admiral, the Commander of the floating battery ſet on fire by the red-hot bullets from Gibraltar, was likewiſe eſtabliſhed at Coblentz; and, as it was reported, for the winter: he kept open table for the French. The Prince of Naſſau is well known to be one of thoſe who have much to gain and little to loſe by Revolutions. His preſence was one of the evidences of the truth of the report which commenced about that time; that the emigrants had received very conſiderable aſſiſtance from Ruſſia: this report appeared to me then ſo improbable, that I conceived it to be a mere invention of the leaders, who had found all the other powers of Europe deſert them, and employed this diſtant hope as a laſt reſort, to ſeduce and deceive their underlings: or rather, as I have had good reaſon to regard it ſince, a mere pretext to cover the actual ſupport they obtained from other quarters. I was informed at Coblentz, that they had then received to the amount of at leaſt ten millions of livres from Beckman the banker of Ruſſia at Frankfort; and ten

thouſand ducats from the houſe of Hope at Amſter- October
dam: the ſuſpicion was too glaring not to ſtrike me in a moment; that the greater part of this money muſt come from the French Court. Theſe ſuſpicions were almoſt turned into certainty, during my ſtay at Paris: the money from Frankfort paſſed, as I was told, through the hands of Brentano, Miniſter of Treves at that place. Ruſſia has at preſent no money, her finances are in the greateſt confuſion; and certainly ſhe has no immediate intereſt to ſupport the exiled French nobles: although indeed as they are, the martyrs of arbitrary power, they muſt be dear to every head that wears a Crown. But the King of England was reported with more probability, though with more ſecrecy to have repleniſhed, the empty treaſuries of the emigration: a fact eſteemed highly likely, both from his ſituation and character: the ſame rumour was reported with added ſtrength towards the end of laſt December; and a ſum named to the enormous extent of half a million: it is certain that the courſe of the exchange was affected about that period, in a manner ſufficiently ſingular to authorize the ſuppoſition; ſuch ſtrange irregularities had not been experienced in it for the laſt half century. If the charity of his Majeſty has induced him to contribute thus largely to the ſupport of the cauſe of Kings from his own private fortune; certainly his ſubjects have, in the preſent ſituation of the political ſyſtem, no right to object to it: but if ſuch ſums have really been iſſued from the public treaſury for this purpoſe, perhaps they may think it paying it rather too dear, for the

purchaſe

October purchaſe of poſſible deſolation, even in France; or of the advantages of deſpotiſm in England. Probably, however, the ſums iſſued from England, may have in great part come firſt from France; and been ſent this way, to conceal their real ſource: but I cannot help ſuſpecting, that our country, ever renowned for giving pay to other nations, has here followed her uſual cuſtom, at leaſt in ſome degree. The coin, indeed, which I ſaw current at Coblentz, was all French: but it is now eaſy for any nation to obtain what quantity it may chuſe of French gold.

Let it come, however, from what ſource it might, I had deciſive evidence at Coblentz, that the French Princes had money at their command. The gold Louis of France, exiled like the emigrants from their own country, ſeemed to have followed them thither. Enormous ſums were expended amongſt the tradeſmen of Coblentz, eſpecially with the houſe of Potguyſer, for cloathing and the accoutrements of war: that houſe received not leſs than an hundred Louis every day. Coblentz, at leaſt, will not fail to profit by this affair: the preſent Elector has choſen it as his favourite reſidence; he has built a new palace there; has raiſed many new ſtreets and ſquares; their population and proſperity may, perhaps, derive its date from the French Revolution; unleſs, indeed, the departure of the emigrants, more than undo, as is not impoſſible, all the good their preſence has effected.

The houſe of Hope at Amſterdam is regarded in

in ſome degree by the French patriots, as the Ca- October
binet of Ariſtocracy.

Spite of all the favourable circumſtances which preſented themſelves to my obſervation at Coblentz, my calculations of future probabilities were by no means favourable to the ſucceſs of the Princes. I ſaw both ſides indeed, ariſtocratic and democratic, preparing for war; the ſpeeches to-towards the concluſion of the late National Aſſembly; the reparations I had ſeen making in the fortifications of the French frontier; the ſoldiers I ſaw moving from place to place, all ſhew the ſentiments of the democratic party: and I found the ariſtocrates endeavouring at Coblentz to realize the apprehenſions of the new Governors of France: yet, conſidering the caſe as a politician, I could perceive no hope on the ſide of the Princes, except from future inteſtine diviſions amongſt the preſent poſſeſſors of France: though all the officers of the French armies ſhould deſert, even this could be but a trifle, in compariſon of the ſtrength left behind *. The Princes had been more than two * See p. 7.
years, uſing fruitleſs endeavours to obtain foreign aid, or ſtrike ſome ſtroke at home: they were then attempting to form an army at the beginning of Winter, which was not to act till the following Spring; or, in other words; they were giving half a year's notice, to an enemy much ſtronger than themſelves, that they intended to commence war! Their hope of aſſiſtance was leſs and leſs; the potentates in whom they had truſted, trifled with them; and no material ſtep had been taken by any

October foreign power, in their favour. Farther, I was told at Coblentz: that, when the Elector of Treves conſented to receive the fugitives, he obliged the Princes to enter into an agreement, not to attack France on the ſide of Treves; that his Electorate might not become the ſeat of war: and indeed I could not ſee what Prince would conſent to ſuffer his ſubjects to be pillaged by a war, undertaken for the advantage of the French Princes. Such were the reflexions which occurred to me on the ſpot; when the ſituation, and reſources of the emigrants, were immediately before my eyes.

I walked one morning, during my ſtay at Coblentz, to the reſidence of the Conte d'Artois: an old country palace of the Electors of Treves, about two miles from Coblentz, on the road to Andernach; built in the midſt of a flat, where there is nothing to be ſeen either of the Rhine or the Moſelle; or of any of the great beauties of landſcape, which have rendered the neighbourhood of Coblentz ſo deſervedly famous. Such has formerly been the taſte of the Archbiſhops of Treves: and though the preſent has built a new palace by the Rhine, his choice of ſituation has by no means ſufficient merit of ſelection to atone for the bad taſte of his aſſociates. The palace where the Conte d'Artois reſides has a wood behind it, cut into walks and avenues, not wholly unpleaſant, for ſo flat a ſituation. The number of French on the road, on foot, in carriages, and on horſeback, going to pay their Court, gave it great air and life, even in ſpite of the rain, with which I

was

was unfortunate enough to be accompanied. A ſtranger among the emigrants, cannot fail to feel ſome ſurprize at finding: that Monſieur, though the elder brother in emigration, is ſcarce ever mentioned among them; but that the Conte d'Artois is every thing: Monſieur is indeed, reported, to be almoſt always either drunk or aſleep. October

From Coblentz I proceeded down the Rhine to Bonn and Cologne. I found the Elector of Cologne leſs anxious to enable his ſubjects to profit by the influx of the emigrants, than his brother and neighbour of Treves; who permits them to ſtay, and ſpend their money, for the improvement of Coblentz and the reſt of his ſtate. The Elector of Cologne on the contrary would not permit the French to remain more than eight days in any one place of his territories: a regulation oſtenſibly reported, to be owing to ſome private pique, conſequent on the treatment he himſelf is ſaid to have received at Paris. But it rather appeared to me an evident demonſtration, that the Houſe of Auſtria bore no real good will to the refugees, notwithſtanding theſe exiles have ever been freely received, and perhaps in ſome meaſure encouraged at Bruſſels: if Auſtria ſincerely deſired to aſſiſt the fugitives, I could not believe that any private pique of the Elector would be allowed ſo much to preponderate.

The farther I proceeded, the more I heard of the prodigious extent of the French emigration. The very ſtatements of the National Aſſembly itſelf bore witneſs, that the accounts I had received at Coblentz were by no means exaggerated. Its

October exceſs ſometimes made me fear, that it might in the end produce bloodſhed: yet uſeleſs bloodſhed: for I recollect no inſtance in hiſtory, wherein exiles, or at leaſt exiles expelled by the introduction of liberty, have ever produced any material change in the Government which expelled them; except when ſtrongly aided by ſome foreign power, which did not ſeem likely to be the caſe with theſe people. Indeed the very emigrants themſelves felt this truth; as ſome of them afterwards told me, that their party alone would be wholly inſufficient to effect its deſigns: and the moſt important and wealthy among them even ventured to declare; that they would undertake nothing, without efficient aſſiſtance from ſome foreign power. "Our fortunes," they ſaid, "are in the "hands of our opponents; without conſidera-"ble foreign aſſiſtance, it is not likely we ſhould "meet with much ſucceſs: the riſk is too great, "and the probability of being proſperous too "ſmall; for we will not leave our children in "want." At Greven Macheren; the poor had told me their poverty would force them to return; here the rich attributed the ſame effect to their riches: and certainly the property of the emigrants is a ſtrong bond of ſecurity, in the hands of the actual Government of France.

When at Cologne I could not refuſe myſelf the pleaſure of reviſiting the valuable gallery of Duſſeldorff, at ſo ſmall a diſtance from that city: but Duſſeldorff was the limits of my excurſion down the Rhine; I returned from thence to Aix la Cha-

pelle, in my way to Maeſtricht and Liege. The October
ſeaſon of Spa being finiſhed, many of the emigrants, who had amuſed themſelves there during the Summer, were retired to Aix; and ſome new ones were added to them from other places: the valuable ſhares of the moſt reverend the Biſhop of Liege, in the gaming tables of Spa, having received their portion of French gold; the Magiſtrates of Aix were taking their turn in the ſame profits.

The ordinary at which I ſometimes dined during my ſtay at Liege, was principally filled with French refugees, and officers of the Auſtrian troops in garriſon there. The emigrants were frequently people of conſiderable rank: yet the Auſtrians treated them with ſuch marked contempt, as I muſt confeſs often hurt my feelings. The reproaches of the Auſtrians did not ariſe, it is true, from their good wiſhes to the National Aſſembly; but from a ſuppoſition, that the emigrants had not exerted themſelves properly. "Had "you maintained proper ſubordination in your "army," ſaid the Auſtrians, "you had never "been in this ſituation." Thoſe, indeed, who know the relative characters of the French and German armies, will feel, that this reproach was greatly founded on a more intimate acquaintance with the character of the latter, than of the former: but when the refugees, converting their hopes into aſſurance, told the Auſtrians; that ere long they ſhould march under the ſame enſigns; the latter laughed at the ſuppoſition, ſeemed almoſt to expreſs a reſolution not to do it; and even ventured

October tured to ridicule Louis XVI. himſelf: the unfortunate French, needy and dependent, were obliged to bear it all in ſilence. I felt; that if the refugees did not ſpeedily adopt ſome more happy meaſures, they were likely ſoon to become the mockery of Europe.

An ingenious obſervation of an emigrant at this table, on the revolution of his country, appeared to me important enough to be remembered. He ſaid: the revolutioniſts had aboliſhed the ariſtocracy of nobility, to eſtabliſh the ariſtocracy of money; "for it is an acknowledged truth," he added, "that men cannot remain equal, but ſome "ariſtocracy muſt exiſt: now it is left to be tried, "whether the ariſtocracy of men raiſed by ſudden "fortune, will be more uſeful to mankind; than "that of thoſe, who, by principle and educa-"tion, were rendered honourable and well in-"formed!"—But he omitted in his repreſentation thoſe circumſtances which were favourable to the oppoſite party: the ariſtocracy of money, is only another name for the ariſtocracy of the improvement of mankind in arts, and every ſpecies of the augmented powers of civiliſation; ſince money is, in this ſenſe, the ſame as capital, or the power of increaſe of the capacities of civiliſed ſociety. Finally: all ſuperiority acts nearly alike; to render men independent in morals, as well as ſituation.

The advances of the democracy againſt the feudal ariſtocracy in Europe, may be traced up to the Revolutions in Swiſſerland, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, or even ſtill higher: but perhaps

perhaps the firſt writer, who was able to give any November
eſſential blow to nobility, was the famous Cervantes: in the character of Don Quixote, he rendered ſome of the moſt brilliant and intereſting qualities of the nobility, ridiculous: and what is once rendered ridiculous, ſoon becomes diſregarded and deſpiſed.

Having completed at Liege, the intereſting circuit I had propoſed to myſelf, on the Meuſe, the Moſelle, and the Rhine, I determined, like many of my fellow viſitants at Spa, to proceed to Paris: chuſing for my conveyance, the public ſtage; a ſituation which muſt afford me the beſt poſſible means of feeling the diſpoſition of the country, during ſo ſpeedy a paſſage through it. I quitted Liege the ſecond of November. My companions were: a young and ignorant Liege Eccleſiaſtic, with a friend of his going to ſtudy ſurgery at Paris: a gentleman of Normandy, a French babbler, of the ſtile of the antient ſyſtem, who had been at Coblentz and Bruſſels as an emigrant; but, finding nothing likely to be done this Winter, was returning home; for there was a perpetual circle of emigration backwards and forwards alſo even in France: laſtly, a French Abbé, a very learned and ingenious man; who reſided ſtill at Paris, though evidently one of the diſſatisfied, and a nonconformiſt; he had paſſed his Summer at Spa and Aix la Chapelle among ſome of the principal families of the refugees; and was now returning to Paris. All the carriage, except myſelf and ſervant, were ariſtocrates.

I en-

November I entered France by Givet, as I had done before: on my former entrance I had ſeen no cuſtom-houſe officer, even there; but on this occaſion my baggage was examined, and very ſtrictly: a contradiction which ſeems an evident proof and conſequence, of the irregularity, of the operations of finance, and of government in general, at leaſt at that period.

I learnt in this journey, that the clergy of France are exactly in the ſame ſtate of principles, which thoſe of England experienced immediately after our Revolution. The French eccleſiaſtics who have ſworn to the Conſtitution, are regarded by the reſt as ſchiſmatics: and are declared ſo by the Pope; whoſe legal power in France, indeed, is ſo much curtailed by the Revolution, that the country can now hardly be regarded as more Roman Catholic than England; they acknowledged him only as the firſt of Biſhops, capable merely of admonition: and they have even deſtroyed the title of Archbiſhop, as not primitive; converting it into that of Metropolitan of a diſtrict. Thoſe eccleſiaſtics who have not ſworn, among whom are the majority of almoſt every rank, eſpecially the ſuperior ones, correſpond exactly to our nonconformiſts: and will probably produce a ſimilar ſucceſſion. They refuſe to attend the maſſes of the conformiſts. Many of the conformiſts have married, even without the intervention of any actual conſtitutional permiſſion: a circumſtance which greatly ſcandalizes the oppoſite party; ſince it is an abſolute

lute contravention to the vows of chaſtity they have November
all poſitively made.

The ariſtocrates, my companions, informed me; that Givet is the paſs into France, where their party meets with the leaſt interruption: and indeed, what I ſaw on this occaſion of the principles of the inhabitants of its neighbourhood, ſeemed to indicate, that the majority were averſe to the preſent Government. We were joined at Givet, by a director of the diligence, alſo ariſtocratic; he came with us to Soiſſons: and we received into our company likewiſe a citizen of Paris, who had been on the frontiers, to act as a national guard, if neceſſary; but was returning home, in conſequence of the abſence of immediate danger. From Givet, even as far as Retel, the ariſtocratic, or anti-revolution principles, ſeemed to prevail: but from thence to Paris, the number of abſolute ariſtocrates, appeared very ſmall; though all, indeed, could not by any means be regarded, as friends to the actual ſyſtem.

At Retel, we found a body of ſix or ſeven hundred national guards from Orleans; for the national guards are quartered in different places on the old principles of the regular regiments; and not merely at home. This party appeared, well dreſſed, and tolerably well diſciplined, far ſuperior to thoſe I had ſeen at Thionville. I ſuſpect that the beſt affected of the national guards, may be choſen to be quartered in the leaſt ſatisfied countries.

We arrived at Rheims on Sunday evening, the ſixth of November. There had been a tumult

November juſt before our arrival; in conſequence of the chriſtening of a child, as I underſtood, in a cellar, by nonconformiſt eccleſiaſtics: the people had riſen on the occaſion, and inſulted the houſe, but were diſperſed by the national guards. From this incident it was evident: that the people of Rheims were not favourable to the expelled clergy; nor, conſequently, to the ariſtocratic cauſe. During all my future ſtay in France, accounts of ſimilar tumults, produced by diſputes relative to the eccleſiaſtics; either on one ſide, or the other; perpetually appeared before the Public, and engaged the attention of the National Aſſembly: nor have they ceaſed even to the preſent moment.

I have underſtood, from the relation of thoſe who have been there; that the parts of the iſle of France, and eſpecially of Picardy, bordering on the diſtrict of Champagne which I paſſed, appear unfriendly to the preſent ſyſtem. A gentleman, who lately went from Paris through Valenciennes into Brabant, has informed me; that he found the poſt on the road complain greatly of the aſſignats, and their fall in price: and that, at Valenciennes the people loudly lamented many effects of the revolution. But the poſt at leaſt is an intereſted party.

It was with much ſatisfaction, however, that I obſerved on my journey, the ſame ſymptoms of improvement in the country, which I had perceived on my former paſſage through France; notwithſtanding all the complaints I conſtantly heard. The roads and inns I have already noticed: I can add farther; that the cultivation of the country was

manifeſtly much amended; the population ſeemed to be increaſed; and numbers of new cottages and farm houſes were building every where. November

I came to Paris on the ſeventh of November, and remained there till the end of December. As I continued, during all my ſtay, to note down my ſentiments of paſſing politics, it will be neceſſary, conſtantly to refer my obſervations to the epoch when they were made, eſpecially as far as they limit or contradict one another: for I conceive, that a very ſenſible change of ſituation took place in the period of my reſidence.

The national cockade, no longer univerſal in the provinces, I found to be abſolutely neceſſary at Paris. But though the Pariſians were not ariſtocratic, many, perhaps even the majority, ſeemed to be diſſatisfied. They ſaid, that France was ruined; that the paper money had annihilated commerce; and that its credit was even become ſuſpicious: other nations, and eſpecially England, were profiting, as they complained, by their confuſion; whilſt France, as indeed ſeemed too true, was torn into different factions, which evidently threatened a civil war. The life of Mirabeau was regarded by many of all parties; as the means which would have moſt contributed to introduce peace and harmonized Government: yet, perhaps, only becauſe he was dead! Civil war is the reſource of deſperation, it is true; and much is required to force men to adopt it: but that neceſſity appeared to me then preparing: and the reign of horror and confuſion ſeemed at hand. France

November had by ſome been ſaid to be divided into four principal parties: the Ariſtocrates; approaching neareſt to the principles of the old Government; few in number, as conſiſting almoſt excluſively of the nobility and their immediate dependants, all attached to the party by intereſt: the Republicans, in direct oppoſition to them, wanting to convert France into a mere democracy: theſe were the two extremes, between whom were placed; the Monarchiſts, wiſhing to render the conſtitution of France, nearly ſimilar to that of England; and the Publiciſts, inclining rather more towards republicaniſm. Such had been ſaid to be the great diviſions; but I found the ſtate of parties changed: from my own obſervation I learned, that the Publiciſts and Monarchiſts had been oſtenſibly reduced into one party, by the acceptance of the Conſtitution; ſo that France only preſented three factions, the two extremes, and the moderate men, according to the natural habits of party. Yet, individually, I perceived, that ſcarce any two Frenchmen held the ſame opinion; but all was diſcord and confuſion. In one point, however, all parties, and all individuals, ſeemed to agree: that the old Government was deteſtable.

I found the walls of the ſtreets ~~of Paris~~ covered with inflammatory papers, of every various tendency and party; ſome of them even openly exhorting to civil war: the people met in knots, in the gardens, walks, and public places; where they talked politics in the moſt unbridled manner, every perſon being the orator of his own peculiar ſentiments;

ments; the coffee houſes were alſo crouded with similar circles. November

Placed in this ſituation, therefore, my reflexions were unfavourable to France. I remembered, indeed, that I had ſeen, France was in no apparent danger from without; the powers of Europe, ſatified with her preſent condition, appeared willing to leave the work of her own ruin, to herſelf. Nor were the emigrants able to do any thing by external violence: they were alone; they had not force ſufficient to become formidable; nor, farther, could they even find on any of the frontiers of France, a place, from whence they could expect to be permitted to attack it; not even in the trifling dependant poſſeſſions of their own Cardinal of Rohan. But within, all was peril: the embers of deſtruction ſeemed to be kindled: and who could ſay, where, and when, they would be extinguiſhed! Thus far then I found myſelf a true conditional prophet. I had ever been of opinion, that the efforts of the emigrants from without would be futile; and that France was in no external danger: but, that internal diſſentions were to be expected; whoſe exceſs would be the only hope of the emigrants, and the only evil France had any real reaſon to dread. What are eighty or ninety thouſand men, though all deſperate, and all ſoldiers, or even officers? when compared to twenty-five millions of people! Arms, however, from the conſtitution of the national guards, were put into the hands of the people; and they certainly

November tainly muſt, in all events, be able to preſerve their own rights and privileges.

It now appeared to me, that the National Aſſembly had proceeded too violently towards imaginary perfection, without ſufficiently conſidering practical poſſibility: a ſpirit naturally conſequent on the character of the authors of the Revolution, ſeveral of whom were mere theoriſts and literary men. Like the Emperor Joſeph II., they conſidered the end, without being capable of the means. Now the good or evil of the end, are really conſequent from the means; and a poſſible good may, in many caſes, be an actual evil—however, in blaming the exceſs of theory, let me not be guilty of it!

My obſervations on this occaſion ultimately led me to wiſh the nation might ſtill fortunately be convinced; that civil war was, of all evils, the greateſt; before it was taught ſo by experience: and that, however ſome individuals may ſuffer, their adverſity is proſperity to the public; if compared with the tremendous horrors which enſue, when mutual confidence and ſocial peace are all annihilated; when brother takes up arms againſt brother; when the ſon appears in the field againſt his father, and pillages and burns the dwellings of his youth!

Some hope, however, appeared, from the comparative conſideration of the ſtate of America during the war of 1775: the Americans were then as much, or, perhaps, even more, diſunited, than I now found the French to be: the Royaliſts correſponded to the French emigrants, and their proportion was probably greater: yet America was finally

ſettled,

ſettled, without any civil war! The diſſenſions in France, it was nevertheleſs to be conſidered, had increaſed: the nation was much more united in its ſentiments at firſt, than it had been ſince; and the diſunion continued to augment inſtead of diminiſh! November

Many of the ariſtocrates themſelves confeſſed to me; that nothing could be more impolitic, than their emigrating; ſince they thus made themſelves uſeleſſly known and conſpicuous, as the common enemies of the other parties. Some of their clergy treated theſe events, as a puniſhment due to the State, for interfering in the American war in order to deprive us unjuſtly of our poſſeſſions; an interference which has been ſo evidently the immediate cauſe of what has ſince happened. I perceived, however, that almoſt all the nobility of France had emigrated, or were ready to do it: and their very daring the riſk of emigration, ſeemed in ſome meaſure to demonſtrate, great conſciouſneſs of their own ſtrength; or at leaſt, great deſperation.

During my ſtay in France, the emigration continued with equal vehemence, till the beginning of December: in that month it ſeemed rather to abate; but I believe it has been renewed again ſince in all its force.

Paris evidently appeared, to have experienced a very ſenſible change; as all, and eſpecially the diſſatisfied, united to complain. The antient ſplendor of the metropolis of France, exiſted no more. The ſcenes which uſed to ſwarm with crouds of the wealthy and the gay, were become empty,

November empty, or filled with people of an oppoſite deſcription: even the Palais Royal was a deſert, in compariſon of what I had before ſeen it; and all its train complained of poverty and want of trade. The Palace of the Tuilleries and its neighbourhood, were as ruinous and empty, as before the King was impriſoned there; the very National Aſſembly itſelf, attracted no great concourſe about it. The crouds of brilliant carriages, which uſed to fly and flutter through the ſtreets of Paris, had vaniſhed. The appearance of the Court ſeemed to reſemble that of a fanatical conventicle. Almoſt all the great houſes were empty, or converted to new purpoſes; and moſt of them, except thoſe belonging to the blood royal, were advertiſed to be let: the number of houſes in Paris, thus advertiſed, was incredible: yet ſome dwellings of the middle ſize were ſtill building. Skeletons of palaces, and other great ſtructures, commenced before the Revolution; appeared neglected, and ghaſtly, in different places. After ſuch eſſential and fatal changes; the converſion of churches and convents into club rooms and theatres; the almoſt uninterrupted ſilence of the bells, which uſed to rattle in the ears of the inhabitants; the rareneſs of the military and of the Knights of St. Louis; the total diſappearance of the Monks; together with other minor alterations, conſequent on the great events which have happened; hardly deſerve enumeration.

Yet Paris ſeemed to be then; what perhaps it long continued; the quieteſt place in all the dominions

nions of France: ſpite of the manifeſt diſſatisfac- November
tion of the people, vented, as I have already ſaid, in daily and even hourly complaints. Among theſe, one of the moſt common, was, that of the abſence of the rich. The rich and noble, they ſaid, ſupplied the ſupport of the poor; for, both the people in the provinces and the Pariſians, lamented the want of commerce. They added alſo: that, before the Conſtitution was formed, they had been told all men were equal; but they now find, the wealthy, under the name of Citoyen actifs, have taken poſſeſſion of the Government in the new ſyſtem, juſt as they did in the old one; excluding them from the counſels, even of the diſtricts, and from all ſhare in the direction of affairs. The commonalty of France were ſo complaiſant to their leaders, as to believe at the Revolution; that they were inſtantly to be relieved from all taxes, by the new Government: and many ſtill, eſpecially of the country people, refuſed to pay the legal impoſitions, under this plea. The ſaving of this expence, was a great encouragement to the farmers; and was aſſigned by ſome perſons, as a principal reaſon for the number of houſes building in the country: many of the farmers were ſaid to have proceeded ſo far upon theſe revolutional principles, as even to refuſe to pay their rent!

The common people in Paris, alſo complained loudly, that the price of every thing roſe, without any adequate increaſe of their wages. The cauſe of this fact, was evidently the paper money, whoſe value was below that of caſh: but the increaſe of

November the price of commodities, was ſtill unequal to the inferiority of the value of paper; the price continued however on the increaſe, as indeed it ought to do.

* See p. 9. The loweſt aſſignats, as I have already ſaid *, were of five livres: but as they neceſſarily drove all coin, even of the ſmalleſt kind, out of circulation; ſince no man would willingly give coin for aſſignats, of the ſame name indeed, but leſs real value; it became abſolutely requiſite to create bills for ſtill ſmaller ſums. The commercial people therefore, at Paris and elſewhere, joined in aſſociations for this purpoſe; and paper money, under the name of Billets de Confiance, was current for ten, and even for five ſous. It was an aſſociation of this ſort,

† See p. 8. which I ſaw advertiſed at Sedan †. Seventeen or eighteen per cent. was the average of the agio on aſſignats, about the middle of November.

Almoſt all the advantages of the new ſyſtem of Government in France therefore, ſtill remained to be expected: and it was to be hoped, that the expectation would not be vain: but the preſent appearances were alarming; and Paris eſpecially was changed from brilliant ſplendor to gloomy mediocrity. If any part had gained, it was certainly not the metropolis, but the country: Paris had evidently ſacrificed herſelf for the general good. Public entertainments, however, were more numerous than at any former period: miſery, and eſpecially French miſery, muſt be deluded with a ſong!

A multitude of new oeconomical inſtitutions, partaking of the ſcheming ſpirit of the times, offered

fered themſelves to my attention in every ſtreet. November
One of the moſt ſingular, was an office for weddings: where people of both ſexes, might go and regiſter, themſelves and their pretenſions, for huſbands and wives: a foundation, which is ſaid to have been eſſentially uſeful. Every perſon who chuſes it, is permitted to offer memorials and petitions to the National Aſſembly: and theſe are ever detailed in arguments; with many vaunts, and pretenſions to public ſpirit; a liberty which may be generally beneficial, but muſt often be productive of abſurdities, and interruption of buſineſs.

I obſerved with pain, that the famous bronze figures of ſlaves, which ſurrounded the ſtatue of Louis XIV. in the Place des Victoires, were removed among the other braſs, to be melted into pence and halfpence: whilſt the bad figure of Louis XV. in the place called after his name, was left untouched. I lamented the decay, nay! almoſt the ruin of taſte at Paris: and wondered that nobody had been found, willing to redeem them for the value of their metal. But I have been ſince told, in alleviation of this ſin againſt good taſte; that it was the rage of liberty, and not the ſordidneſs of avarice, which had cauſed them to be removed; they were monuments of ſlavery! and either the rage of zeal, or the arts of policy, had thought proper to ſeclude them from the public eye. It was ſaid they would again hereafter, like our ſtatue of Charles I. at Charing Croſs, be reſtored to their old ſituations: but whoever has obſerved the progreſs of public affairs, will doubt this

November reſtoration; there is much reaſon to fear, that they may rather be deſtroyed, and their deſtruction concealed; perhaps even already they are ſubjected to the crucible. No man of taſte can viſit Paris, without regretting alſo the delay occaſioned by the Revolution, of the magnificent deſign of adorning the gallery of the Louvre with all the noble monuments of human art poſſeſſed by the public at Paris: and eſpecially with the uſeleſs pictures of the Royal Cabinet, and the Royal Garde-Meuble: I have called it delay; but I fear I ſhould rather term it ſubverſion. In the mean while ſome of the fineſt productions of French art, are wholly concealed from the public eye. The pictures of Le Sueur, painted in the cloiſter of the Charter Houſe at Paris, have been hid from the applauſe of mankind, and perhaps left to ſpoil, for the laſt eight years!

The ſame day, that I ſketched the foregoing obſervations at Paris, Tueſday the eighth of November; the National Aſſembly paſſed the decree to recall the emigrants, under pain of confiſcation and capital puniſhment, by the firſt of January! I then thought, that the die was thrown; and nothing remained to be known, but the fortune of the caſt!

The news alſo was juſt arrived; that the Negroes were riſen in Domingo; and that all the iſland was in confuſion.

Such were the firſt impreſſions, which the metropolis of France imprinted, on my imagination, or on my reaſon: and which future experience, generally

nerally tended to confirm; as it opened new sources of obſervation and information. Within a few days after my arrival, I took occaſion to enter into ſeveral of the churches which remained; that is the pariſh churches, for few others are left: I conceived, their appearance would contribute to ſhow me, the ideas of the people, relative to the eccleſiaſtics. They were generally empty, or comparatively ſo. On the greater feaſt days, the leſs being now annihilated; and alſo on Sundays; they were ſomewhat frequented: but the worſhippers ſeemed even then, to be much fewer than of old; and almoſt all the devotees, who uſed to fill the churches at other times, burning incenſe to the Queen of Heaven and her ſaintly Court, were vaniſhed. For theſe circumſtances, various reaſons may indeed be aſſigned: ſuch as the decay of the preſent religion; now, it is true, reduced ſo low, as ſeemingly to prepare that great and rare event, the introduction of a new one: but I ſaw in theſe facts, and in the rumours of the kingdom; proofs, rather of the force, than the decay of religion. It ſeemed to me; that the people had deſerted the churches, becauſe they did not ſincerely approve the prieſthood officiating in them: an old prejudice of habit, bound them to the excluded clergy: and they regarded their preſent ſucceſſors as ſchiſmatics and deſerters, if not as traitors and heretics, eſpecially the women, who are the principal cauſe of filling churches. The old clergy had far more influence over the people, than was ſuppoſed; and their expulſion ſhook the old ideas, November

till

November till the people knew not what to truſt. Earlier in the Revolution; many, even of the French, had aſſured me: that the moſt fatal oppoſition it had to dread, would ariſe from the Nobles. But I own this ſtrongly contradicted my opinion of mankind; among whom the motives of fanaticiſm have ever ſhown themſelves the moſt powerful incentives to action. At this time, it ſeemed pretty evidently, to be the moſt general opinion, that the greateſt danger aroſe from the prieſthood; principally from the clergy, who had not taken the oaths: more deſtructive, as they were more ſecret and domeſtic, enemies; than the declared and abſent emigrants *. From them alſo, the principal diſturbances had proceeded. However, the mob was generally againſt them: the majority, at leaſt of the loweſt order, were ſtill friends to the preſent ſyſtem, ſpite of the evils they ſuffered; ſpite of the riſing price of every neceſſary, ſpite of the want of commerce, ſpite of the continuing emigration! Some uneaſineſſes were even created by the conſtitutional clergy: who naturally diſplayed almoſt as many pretenſions, and as high a prejudice in favour of their character; as their expelled predeceſſors.

* See p. 34.

The influence which the church ſtill poſſeſſed, over the minds of the people, had been felt by the conſtituent aſſembly. The exordium of the conſtitution, and the declaration of the rights of man; manifeſtly diſplay in many of their phraſes; an intention to ſeparate religion wholly from the ſtate, and leave no national church. But they found the

the people would not ſubmit to this ſeparation: the old habits were too ſtrong: and the Aſſembly were afraid to venture upon the meaſure. November

At all events however, the clergy appeared to me to have ſcarce a chance of being reſtored, even to any, of their former poſſeſſions; and therefore no hope, of regaining their antient influence. For; even though the party of the emigrants, to which common intereſt united them, were to prevail in the completeſt manner: the French nobles are certainly not fonder of the clergy, than the democratic party, rather much leſs ſo. The alliance of the clergy and the nobles, is like that of the cat and the cock againſt the fox: the nobility of France were, above all the French, famous for irreligion. The emigrants indubitably would hazard no advantages they might obtain; to reſtore the eccleſiaſtics to their lands, and incomes: even though ſome of their own connections might indeed perſonally benefit by it; the attempt would neceſſarily be attended with much danger and oppoſition from all thoſe already in poſſeſſion; the ſtate itſelf would be unwilling, and even, from the ſituation of its finances, unable, to reſign its claim: the nobility would be content with dividing what portion they might find poſſible, amongſt themſelves; without undertaking impoſſibilities for the clergy whom they deſpiſe.

Among the enemies of the Revolution; who are certainly ſtrong and numerous, ſince the body of thoſe who have loſt by it is mighty; the clergy, the lawyers, the nobility, and the women, deſerve eſpeci-

November especially to be enumerated: the three first have almost lost their existence; and all four have lost their influence. The former are well known, to be averse to the present system; and their motives are evident: the disgust of the women is less public, and their motives less public: I have lately had occasion to mention one of these motives, their attachment to the ejected clergy: women are by nature attached to the priesthood, even to a proverb; and the treatment of the clergy offended them; prejudiced in favour of the excluded ecclesiastics, they unite with them against the new Constitution. But this is far from being the only disgust the female world has received in France, from the Revolution. All who are acquainted with the history of the eighteenth century, well know, the weight which women have had in the old government of this kingdom: but the new form has almost annihilated it; and the spleen of disappointed ambition, is famous for its bitterness. They have a particular dislike to the clubs, of which they make no part; now the clubs, and especially the Jacobins, have the better half of the government of the kingdom in their hands. So violent and so full of peril, did the female disgust appear; that these associations have found it absolutely necessary to admit the women as spectators, if not as actors: they have constructed galleries in their assembly rooms for the admission of strangers, like the National Assembly: and it is remarkable, that whenever I attended their meetings, the galleries have been almost wholly filled with female visitants. The

men may perhaps be eſteemed, the moſt dange- November
rous enemies of the Conſtitution.

On the evening of the twelfth of November, I went to the French theatre, to ſee Moliere's comedy of Tartuffe: the beſt comedy in the world, performed by the beſt company of comedians altogether now exiſtent. It was performed even with enthuſiaſm; and was therefore a literary feaſt of the firſt order. But it claims attention here, for the exceſſive applauſe beſtowed on the following ſentiment; which Moliere has put into the mouth of Cleante, in the laſt ſcene of the firſt act.

Les hommes, la plûpart, ſont étrangement faits;
Dans la juſte nature, on ne les voit jamais:
La raiſon à, pour eux, des bornes trop petites:
En chaque caractere, ils paſſent ſes limites;
Et la plus noble choſe, ils la gatent ſouvent,
Pour la vouloir outrer et pouſſer trop avant.

This was evidently applied to the conduct of the National Aſſembly, ſuppoſed to puſh the cauſe of liberty to extravagance: agreeable to what I had already remarked of their conduct *: the cen- * See p. 82
ſurers acknowledged liberty to be a moſt noble principle, la plus noble choſe; but they deemed its exceſs, like that of every thing elſe, blamable, and defective.

Some of my neighbours upon this occaſion, whoſe converſation turned upon political affairs; remarked to each other, even with ſurpriſe, the multitudes of emigrants who were quitting France; ſo that the roads of Flanders were covered with

November them; and that they came in loaded carriages, even from Provence, and the remoteſt parts of the kingdom.

As an evidence of the preſent ſtate of moral principles in France, it ſeems to deſerve recording: that; in the entertainment which ſucceeded Tartuffe, a new piece called, The Circle; a young girl, repreſented as freſh from the country and the place of her education, was made to ſay: "Je commence a apprendre, que les Bienſeances "ſont tout; et qu' entre le vice et la vertù, il n'eſt "qu'un prejugè!" I attend not here to the truth, or falſehood, the advantage, or diſadvantage, of the ſentiment; but to the character who is made to pronounce it! Every principle is now treated as a prejudice, even by all ages and claſſes!

The public buildings of a nation, make a part of the ſubject of its public hiſtory; and even the preſent diſtracted Government of France, has produced ſome new ones. Among the moſt diſtinguiſhed works of this ſort, which I found at Paris; was the new bridge, at the place of Louis XV.; built with very flat elliptic arches; a ſtructure truly ſimple and noble. It has the advantage of being nearly on a level, like the bridges of the antients: the very reverſe of our mountainous bridges, which it is almoſt a labour to aſcend.

The ſtructure once deſigned for a church of St. Genevieve, is another of theſe novelties; not yet completed in the inſide. They had raiſed a dome upon it, ſince my former viſit to Paris: now a dome is ever an ugly and irregular work of architecture,

tecture, when thus ſtuck on the roof of a building; but this dome is moſt ſingularly execrable, conic, clumſy, and deformed; a diſgrace to the ſtructure to which it adheres. Domes, thus raiſed on a tympanum, were an invention of the imperial Greeks; who ventured not, however, ſo far to contradict the rules of antiquity; as to make them even ſo conic as the ſemicircle on the outſide: Brunelleſco, in the ſpirit of gothic taſte, conceived he had greatly improved upon them; by rendering his imitation at Florence, much more ſo: Michael Angelo had an eye too claſſic, to commit an equal exceſs; but even the dome of the church of St. Peter errs in this reſpect: and of all our attempts of the ſort in northern Europe, the one is worſe than the other: the laſt, the dome of St. Genevieve, is the moſt defective, and that of our own St. Paul is perhaps the beſt. November

It is ſcarcely neceſſary to add; that this edifice has been converted by the National Aſſembly, from its original deſign of a church into a public mauſoleum, for all thoſe great men who may hereafter be deemed worthy of ſuch honour from their country. The bodies of Voltaire and Mirabeau have conſecrated it: far beyond the power of holy oils!

Under the portico of the ſtructure; I ſaw the bier, employed in the funeral proceſſions to carry the bodies of thoſe, who deſerve interment in this temple of heroes. It is an imitation of the antique, truly ſimple and noble; conceived in the beſt ſtile of claſſic taſte: vaſt indeed, and maſ-

November five; with heavy axles, and heavy wheels: but this very maſſiveneſs, gives it that juſt air of dignity, which ſuch a machine ought to poſſeſs; and which our modern legerity muſt ever want. The wheels are ornamented with ſtuds, the carriage with griffins, in relief: the poles have heads of rams; the axles at the nuts of the wheels, terminate in heads of lions: all in the pureſt ſtile. It might perhaps have been better finiſhed in England, but certainly it would not have been ſo well compoſed.

As my ſubject has led me here, to treat of the fine arts: I cannot omit paying a juſt tribute of praiſe to the merit of David: at preſent the Apelles of France. His taſte is claſſic: his ſtile of deſign and compoſition, chaſte, and maſterly; his expreſſion is ſtrong and noble, yet with attic grace; and almoſt as varied as that of Raphael: his colouring is warm, bold, and brilliant, perhaps even too highly finiſhed; ſometimes poſſibly alſo, it becomes harſh, in order to avoid the tameneſs uſually apparent among thoſe who have hitherto employed labour in the works of the pencil.

Towards the concluſion of the firſt week of my ſtay at Paris, the King gave his veto, to the decree againſt the emigrants *; confirming, however, the part relative to the recall of the Princes; and publiſhing a proclamation at the ſame time, to perſuade the reſt to return home. He did not ſuffer this exertion of his power to be long expected.

* See p. 44.

This famous Veto, appears to me to have been: the firſt marked ſtep, of the returning power of the

the Crown; which I ſoon after, evidently diſco- November
vered: the firſt decided evidence of ſuperiority, in the natural ſtruggle between the executive power, and the National Aſſembly. I doubted its character at firſt; but I was ſpeedily convinced, that this was the truth. The very remembrance of it, conſtantly ſeemed to goad the partizans of liberty.

Conſidered politically, the decree certainly ordained the moſt prudent meaſures which could be purſued againſt the emigrants: ſince it affected their individual intereſt; which the evidence of their own mouths, as well as that of natural reaſon, had informed me, was the moſt effectual means of diſuniting them *: and perhaps France may here- *See p. 2
after have reaſon to repent, the adoption of the Veto. Several motives, beſides that of immediate advantage in the political ſtruggle, certainly conduced to perſuade the King to employ his Veto. He gained time by it: and was thereby enabled to feel the ſenſe of the people, and to obtain new ſtrength in the popular opinion, before the affair was brought to extremities. Farther; a large party in the kingdom, more friendly to the ariſtocracy, exclaimed againſt the decree, as tending abſolutely to annihilate the order of nobility. "The National Aſſembly, they cried, are "never ſatisfied with deſpoiling and oppreſſing "the nobles!" But this their outcry, wanted the foundation of ſolid reaſon. Private intereſt would have brought home the majority of the emigrants; and thoſe who would not return, certainly merited

the

November the punishment of their self-chosen contumacy! The order of people of rank and fortune, would have by no means been destroyed by it: and farther, others would soon have risen in the room of those who might have been wanting; the loss of a few names, could only be lamented by fools and children.

The part of this decree left in force, recalled the Princes home: according to the constitution therefore, if Monsieur did not return, by the appointed term, which happened in the month of January, he lost all claim and right to the contingence of Regency, the same would happen to the Conte d'Artois after a similar period; and also again to his children. I understood from good authority, towards the middle of December; that Monsieur was anxious to return, but was not permitted. According to the maxim stated in the last paragraph except one; self interest is, of all interests, the strongest.

I saw the King and Queen soon after my arrival: both seemed in good health, and good spirits; he appeared fatter, and the Queen even handsomer, than when I had last seen her, six years before. It is true, the life of her Majesty at present, is less harassing and more regular, than that she led formerly. But I could not help concluding from their appearance; that the dignity of royalty was still worth possession, even in France! Their son and daughter are fine children; especially the son.

The speeches in the National Assembly now began to sound the note of war; both foreign and domestic:

domeſtic: ſo great a Revolution, they ſaid, was never effected without it: though in the former Aſſembly it had been a frequent ſubject of boaſting, that the Revolution had been performed ſo peaceably! A member of the Conſtituent Aſſembly, towards the concluſion of its exiſtence; had already given the key to theſe military flouriſhes. November

I attended a ſeſſion of the National Aſſembly, on the twentieth of November, for the firſt time. Their proceedings are ſo careſully detailed in the public gazettes; that attending them, rarely merits the trouble of being confined in a croud ſo many hours as their meetings require. The tumult and irregularity of the Aſſembly is every where famous; and we ou ſelves as Engliſh, eſteem it even as imputed honour; that our Houſes of Parliament are more orderly. The noiſe and confuſion of the Aſſembly is certainly blamable: it waſtes time, and is open to contempt and ridicule. But are not the long and tedious ſpeeches of our Parliament, full as abſurd; ſpun as they often are, merely to collect the flies of faction, till the weary audience eſcape like boys out of a ſchool! Spite of tumult, the ſittings of the Aſſembly ſeldom exceed four or five hours: whilſt our Members of Parliament ſometimes weary one another for fourteen or fifteen! and frequently extend their ſittings to ten or twelve! Even the beſt ſpeeches of our beſt ſpeakers are too long: they fatigue attention; and may confuſe, but can ſeldom perſuade, at leaſt if addreſſed to rational beings! One meeting of the National Aſſembly, during my ſtay at Paris, extended

November tended through the whole night, to the next morning: but it was paſſed in examinations as a Court of Juſtice for their own peculiar diſtrict; not in liſtening to the prepared and tedious volubility of avidity or venality.

It certainly deſerves to be remarked; that hardly more than a tenth of thoſe who have right of ſuffrage, the Citoyens actifs, as they are called; voted in the elections of the preſent Aſſembly. The ariſtocrates eſteemed this a certain evidence; that far the majority of the nation was averſe to the preſent Government: but it ſeems to me; they had no ſufficient reaſon to ſuppoſe, that all who had not appeared againſt them, were for them. In England, two thirds of the electors ſcarcely ever vote; generally not half, even in conteſted elections. Farther: the inſtitution is new in France; and to all, except the violent, habit is requiſite to induce them to uſe their rights; and many are repreſſed by a mere, natural, timidity. If a tenth of the nation, two millions and an half, be violent againſt them, it follows that they have no hope. From theſe circumſtances indeed it appears; that the preſent National Aſſembly was choſen excluſively by the moſt violent part of the nation: and it is therefore probable, that the Aſſembly ſhould be, what it is ſaid to be, violently democratic; even more ſo, than its predeceſſor: I heard this character of it at Coblentz, when it was yet but juſt aſſembled.

Corruption had already penetrated the conſtitution: or rather, may be ſaid, to have been bred in its

its vitals. Many of the Members of the preſent National Aſſembly, as I am credibly informed, practiſed the arts of venality, or employed undue influence, to procure their places: in ſpite of all the precautions provided by the Conſtitution to prevent this evil. Man is by nature corrupt and venal. In conſequence of this original ſin; ſome Members are believed with every probability, to have ſullied their hands with the bribes of foreign powers: whilſt others have contented themſelves with the advantages, which their own King chuſes to afford them. One of the moſt material defects of the preſent ſyſtem of government in France, is, the prodigious income granted to the King: more exceſſive, even, than what we pay to our Monarch; and encumbered with much fewer embarraſſments. The French King is allowed near a million and an half ſterling yearly! a property amply ſufficient to enable him and his Miniſters to purchaſe, even doubly, the majority of the Aſſembly. Such an extravagant allowance, is alone a ſufficient defect: but the caſe is ſtill worſe, when a King enjoys an income, not under the control of his people; and worſt of all, if he is permitted to hoard an enormous private fortune, as probably will be the conſequence, whilſt his people groan with debts; increaſed, perhaps, by his own pretended plan of inſolvency, which he forces them to ſupply! Yet ſuch delinquency, to a cool obſerver, ſhould ſurely ſeem almoſt impoſſible to be done or ſuffered by human nature! November

Among the ſubjects treated in the National Aſſembly, on the day I viſited it; the ſtate of the

November finances ſeemed to be the moſt important: it appeared from the accounts of the Committee, that there was a deficiency of nine hundred millions of livres, or about forty millions ſterling, ſince the beginning of the Revolution; and conſequently that Government had not received two thirds of the income of the nation, which is calculated at about five hundred millions annually! Such a ſtate of finance appeared tremendous: and no national domains were evidently able to withſtand the continuance of ſuch a deficiency. The Aſſembly reſolved to conſecrate, every Tueſday, Thurſday, and Saturday, in future, to the regulation of the finances, till it was finiſhed: and the reſolve appears among their votes, but its execution is far leſs apparent. Certainly, however; we, as Engliſh, could have no reaſon to fear; that they ſhould be able to pay their national debt, with the domains they have ſequeſtered: all that can be expected from thoſe funds, muſt be to withſtand the preſent derangement, and pay the expences of the Revolution. The domains are computed to be worth more than three milliards! They have alſo ſold much better than was expected. From this ſtatement, however, I learnt, the futility of the ceremony of burning the aſſignats; of which about three or four millions of livres are committed to the flames every week at Paris; as a ſacrifice to popular deluſion: poſterior reſolutions, for the creation of vaſt quantities of new aſſignats, have changed this conviction into certainty. Alarming, however, as was this appearance of the

ſtate of finance; I felt farther; that civil war, and the invaſion of the emigrants, could not be the means to regulate it, but muſt make it worſe; as intereſt would inſtantly teach all who were concerned in it: and that the great numbers, whoſe eſſential intereſt is peace, from their concern in the national debts and ſecurities; compoſed a weighty balance in favour of the preſent Government; which is in ſome meaſure their work. The paper money alſo, as well as the public funds, ſince both are equally creatures in a good degree dependent on the exiſtence and proſperity of the National Aſſembly; muſt therefore render its poſſeſſors one of the moſt powerful ties to prevent any new rupture in the political body. November

In favour of the finances of France however, I was afterwards aſſured by a Member of the National Aſſembly, and even a Jacobin Member; that the finances wanted order alone, to be perfectly and eaſily collected; and that if order was once obtained, there would be no farther deficiency. I hope this aſſertion was well founded: but I own it ever ſeemed to me improbable.

I have already mentioned * the public braſs; conſiſting principally of bells ſeized from the deſtroyed churches and monaſteries; and now converting into pence and halfpence. The colour of the money, made of this metal, reſembles that of many of the yellow bronze medals, which have reached us from antiquity: now as the ſame cauſes, in all ages, produce the ſame effects; it appears to be probable, that theſe antient coins alſo might

* See p. 43.

November be made from the metal of ſtatues, and other bronze works, melted for the uſe of the State in times of public diſtreſs.

The hiſtory of France ſince the age of Louis XIV. is a leſſon in finance, for all the nations of the modern world: above all it contains the rudiments of the grammar of royalty; to teach Kings; that, in this our age at leaſt, and perhaps in every other, property is the main ſpring of Government. What indeed is the great purpoſe of ſocial government, but the protection of property and peace? The ancients appear not ſufficiently to have attended to the influence of property and finance in the State: it is the part leaſt underſtood, and leaſt explained in the antient hiſtorians; it was left for our Adam Smith, to become the oracle, the more than Tacitus, of this branch of human manners. The weight of debt, whoſe foundations were laid under Louis XIV. induced the preſent Revolution. Funding, when carried to any extent, is incongruous with the principles of abſolute monarchy; as that mode of government affords no ſufficient ſecurity for the depoſited capital. The Regent Orleans, at the death of Louis XIV., found the finances in ſuch diſtreſs, as to induce him to adopt the chimerical ſyſtem of Law; which, by throwing every thing into confuſion, enabled him, to temporize at leaſt; and even to cover, in ſome degree, the blemiſhes of the State. During the long adminiſtration of Cardinal Fleury; whoſe peaceful policy does him more honour as the ſupport of monarchy, not only than his cotemporaries,

ries, but even than poſterity, have hitherto been willing to allow him; the nation had time to re-eſtabliſh itſelf; the good effects of his conduct appeared in the great exertions of France, and at length in her brilliant ſucceſs, during the war of 1748. The celebrated ſeven years war ſoon manifeſted the defects of the finance of France; and, being attended with many misfortunes, prepared the downfal of abſolute monarchy, as contradictory to the adopted ſyſtem of funding: a ſyſtem more powerful than Kings themſelves. The American war completed the work; and obliged the preſent Monarch, by the proſpect of imminent diſſolution, to expiate the faults of his anceſtors, by calling together the forgotten ſtates of his kingdom; and ſubmitting himſelf as the victim of offended liberty and the deſpiſed rights of the people. The effects of the reign of Juſtinian at Conſtantinople, were extremely ſimilar to thoſe of the government of Louis XIV. at Paris: the glorious but conſuming adminiſtration of that Emperor, gave a blow to the Greek empire; which even during nine ſucceſſive centuries, it was never able to recover: and in our days, the Papal State, appears to be exactly in its ſituation. But let us not imagine, that our own Government is free from danger: the power of appearances itſelf alone, ſhields us from immediate peril; but palliatives and well-timed fictions, or even the repeal of inefficient taxes, are not ſufficient to protect us from the future force of this tremendous principle, how much ſoever ſuch meaſures may be productive of tempo-

November

rary

November rary popularity: but if no more effectual means be employed, than thoſe which our Fleury has hitherto adopted; a new Phœnix will hereafter certainly ariſe in England as now in France, from the exanimated aſhes of the old one.

The longer I ſtaid at Paris, the more ſymptoms of diſunion and confuſion appeared. Perhaps there was not an order in France, not a party among the multitude which divided the kingdom, that did not ſeem to be preparing itſelf for new troubles. The very patriots, and the National Aſſembly itſelf, who might be thought to have had moſt reaſon to triumph, were yet diſſatisfied. They complained that the Miniſters were not to be truſted, and eſpecially Montmorin, then Secretary at War: the refuſal of the aſſent to the decree againſt the emigrants had offended them highly; and they treated the King as the traitorous friend of the ariſtocratic party. Some of them even ventured to declare openly, that a new ſhock, ſimilar to thoſe which had preceded, was neceſſary, for the ſupport of the conſtitution: future events explained their meaning. The whole energy of the ſtate appeared to be centrifugal, and none centripetal: the kingdom reſembled a rope of ſand, ready to drop aſunder in a moment. The Revolution now ſeemed to want ſome decided Chief of diſtinguiſhed talents to direct it; but ſuch a character had not appeared during the Revolution: Mirabeau approached it the neareſt; and his death, agreeable to what I have already ſaid *, was ſuppoſed by many to have left a chaſm in the column

* See p. 35.

of

of ſtate; which threatened, every moment, to ex- November
tend even to its foundations.

On the evening of the twentieth of November, I attended the famous club of the Jacobins. The influence of this ſociety is well known, and I have already had occaſion to refer to it more than once. The meeting is held in what was formerly the church of the Jacobins: with which alſo the monaſtery is connected, for committee rooms and other purpoſes. The galleries for the admiſſion of ſtrangers, I have already mentioned*. The affairs of ſtate are treated here, in the ſame manner, though leſs regularly, than in the National Aſſembly: and the reſolutions here made, are often there merely ſanctioned. Not every thing indeed, that is debated there, is predetermined here: but what is reſolved here, ſeldom fails there. It is a Government within the Government: ſome of the Members would have compared it to our political clubs; ſuch as the Conſtitutional Club, the Revolution Club, and others: but there is ſcarcely any reſemblance. Our clubs never regularly debate the affairs before Parliament: nor would their reſolutions be able to direct, ſcarce even to influence the Parliament: their conſequence in the ſtate is very trifling. The French political clubs rather reſemble, the committees of officers, and other ſimilar meetings, during our civil wars: for the time of troubles in one country reſembles the time of troubles in another. Our modern clubs are not concealed Committees of Government.

* See p. 48.

A memo-

November A memorial from the Brabantine patriots, was read before the club on this occaſion; offering to ſupport the Revolution againſt the emigrants, in caſe of neceſſity, with a body of twenty thouſand men.

Alſo the members of ſome of the friendly clubs in London, were admitted to the right of attending the meetings of the Jacobins; in conſequence of a ſimilar privilege conferred on the Jacobins in London. It is the policy of the firmeſt friends of the preſent ſyſtem in France, to ſue as much as poſſible, for the friendſhip of England: I had even heard them, when in France ſix years ago, boaſt the advantages which would enſue from an alliance between the two nations; we ſhould then, they pretended, be maſters of Europe, and conſequently of the world. For the laſt forty years, France has been accuſtomed to make connections, with her moſt inveterate rivals: ſhe has leagued herſelf to Auſtria and Spain: the practice is therefore not ſtrange or ſurpriſing to them. At this time they ſee no other power, which can be of much eſſential ſervice, likely to ally with them: we are at preſent the only nation, of any great importance, which pretends to be free, themſelves excepted: to us therefore they look for countenance and ſupport. Hence every correſpondence with England, is encouraged by the National Aſſembly: hence they receive with tokens of the higheſt reſpect, the addreſſes of Engliſh ſocieties, even of the loweſt claſs; and letters from clubs aſſembling in the moſt inconſiderable taverns of London, are treated

as

as evident monuments of the ſenſe of the Engliſh people; and endeavoured to be confounded with the higheſt authorities of the nation. Thus an addreſs from the members of ſome ſociety, almoſt unknown in London, calling themſelves, the Conſtitutional Whigs; was received by the Aſſembly with the ſame ceremony as though it had iſſued from St. Stephen's chapel; and a deputation even appointed to carry it to the King. They endeavoured to have it believed, from the identity of names; that theſe Conſtitutional Whigs, were the ſame with the great national party, called Whigs! Such are the arts of faction! The French vulgar, eaſily deluded, ſuppoſe the Engliſh nation, warm in their favour; and ready to exert every nerve in their ſupport. The National Aſſembly on the other hand, employs theſe means, not wholly without ſucceſs, in order to obtain popularity. This conduct excites our ridicule: but it procures reſpect from the French, ſtrangers to our domeſtic oeconomy! Thus one part does not know, and the other will not know: that the Engliſh people is invincibly averſe to all alliance with France; that the late Revolution is regarded by the majority among us, through the medium of jealouſy and malevolence; and that, ſuch is the force of our Antigallican antipathy, even liberty itſelf is going out of faſhion in England, becauſe it has found favour in France! In our very dreſs: whatever of our modes is once adopted among them: according to the preſent imitation of our faſhions, which the love of liberty has ſtrengthened abroad: November

November that becomes inſtantly forſaken among us. They certainly however have no right to expect; that we ſhould expoſe ourſelves to a war, upon their account!

A young excapucin appeared at this meeting of the Jacobins, requeſting the influence of the ſociety might be employed to preſerve him his penſion as an excluded monk; in ſpite of his being about to be married; which, regularly, would deprive him of it. He was recommended to marry firſt: and, that then the ſociety, on his application, would employ its influence; as it was expected, with ſucceſs; to obtain his excuſe! It produced no little merriment, both among the female, and the male ſpectators. He appeared a very ſtout hearty young fellow: and likely, as he promiſed, to procure new ſubjects for the ſtate.

Towards the concluſion of the month of November, I began evidently to feel; that the preſent National Aſſembly was far from poſſeſſing that weight in the public eſteem, which belonged to its predeceſſor, and enabled it to act with ſo much energy. I could perceive ſcarcely any government in France. The royal authority had been almoſt annihilated by the Revolution; and now, the aſcendancy which the National Aſſembly had acquired, declining alſo; no power remained to rule the ſtate.

In the theatres; whatever bore an interpretation in favour of the King and kingly dignity, was received with the loudeſt approbation, juſt as the doctrines of liberty formerly were: the prohibited

of the public, eſcaping from them by this means. November
At the Italian theatre, one evening about this time, I heard the phraſe "Quand on ſe bat pour ſon "roi, il faut vaincre ou mourir;" though containing a ſentiment ſuperlatively ariſtocratic, yet meet with a thunder of applauſe from almoſt every part of the houſe. The theatre of the Rue Feydeau however, was, and I believe ſtill is, the ariſtocratic ſtage.

I conceived, that a prodigious leaven of ariſtocracy was then fermenting in France: but I afterwards found myſelf in ſome degree miſtaken; it ſhew itſelf to be not exactly ariſtocratic. The National Aſſembly however, and the Miniſtry or executive power, were eſſentially at variance. Troubles were burſting every where: nor did there appear any Government, in force ſufficient to ſuppreſs them; nor ſeemingly, even to collect the neceſſary taxes of the ſtate, which almoſt all the departments neglected, and ſome openly refuſed, to pay. It then appeared to me, that a coalition by treaty with the Princes and their adherents, conſiſtent with the moſt judicious expectations of thoſe fugitives *, and directed by very able politicians, would become neceſſary to ſettle the kingdom; yet I doubted, whether even this would be ſufficient; for the powers of anarchy were at work, and the exiſting Government ſeemed likely to diſſolve like the old one; or if it did not wholly diſſolve, to ſuffer another criſis much more violent than any which had preceded. Such were the remarks I made from the proſpect then before me:

* See p. 17.

November ſubſequent events altered my ideas, and at the ſame time changed even the nature of the Government. The National Aſſembly has been able, while I now write, to ſwear violently and in peace againſt any attempt to compromiſe the Conſtitution.

It was reported about this time; that the money of the emigrants, came to them from the eſtates of the low countries: another of the inventions em-

* See p. 22 to 24. ployed to conceal its real ſource *. The ariſtocratic party reſumed new courage every day, from the neglect into which the Aſſembly had fallen; and invigorated their meaſures greatly, in conſequence. The friends of the preſent ſyſtem, ſeemed to repent, that the firſt or Conſtituent Aſſembly, as it is called, had not ſat at leaſt a year longer, till affairs were more firmly ſettled: the Conſtitution was ſuppoſed to be finiſhed, they ſaid, much before it really was ſo.

The credit of the aſſignats declined greatly at this period: ſo that the bankers would not keep any quantity in their poſſeſſion, not even to the amount of an hundred louis; not that they were afraid of the final ſolvency of the aſſignats, but of their temporary value. Whatever property, therefore, the bankers received, they inſtantly endeavour to convert into the ſecurities of ſome foreign funds. Every thing bore the aſpect, of expected diſturbances. Yet an advertiſement appeared juſt at this moment; wherein a new bank or banking ſociety, offered to reduce aſſignats into ſmall notes of their own, at the rate of eight in the hundred:

† See p. 41. for the expulſion of ſmall money †, and the want

of

of ſmall aſſignats, had rendered this change alſo a buſineſs of agiotage, and now worth a much higher premium: they likewiſe aſſerted, in the ſame advertiſement; that they would give caſh for aſſignats at a premium of ten in the hundred, in the month of January: but I was then convinced, this muſt be a mere bubble; and I believe it was merely done, either to raiſe a new banking houſe, ſocieties of that kind being then ſo advantageous; or rather, perhaps, to counteract the increaſing depreſſion of the aſſignats. The premium on caſh fluctuated about this time from twenty to thirty five in the hundred; and then ſettled at twenty ſeven. November.

On the laſt day of November and firſt of December, the following moſt ſingular advertiſement appeared in Paris.

Lettre de M. Le Miniſtre de l'Interieur, a M. le Maire de Paris: le 30 November 1791.

Le Roi vient d'etre informè, M. qu'on repand et que l'on s'efforce d'accrediter; des bruits propres a allarmer tous les citoyens, et a troubler la tranquillité publique. On à dit au roi, que des demain peutetre, des couriers ſupposès doivent entrer dans Paris de pluſieurs cotès, et y publier; que les emigrans ſont entrès en France, les armes a la main. On doit annoncer en même tems, que la roi à quittè Paris.

Cet avis, donnè par des perſonnes graves, merite d'autant plus d'attention; que d'autres faits anterieurs, manifeſtent une intention tres caracteriſée, d'ex-

December d'exciter a Paris, un grand mouvement. Vous n'ignorez pas Monſieur, qu'un ſous officier de garde chez le roi, donna il y à un quinzaine de jours, une fauſſe conſigne, ſous le pretexte d'un pretendù projet de depart de ſa Majeſté : on à depuis employè le même pretexte, pour inquieter la reſerve, de l'Hotel de Ville. Hier l'on faiſoit crier dans un Fauxbourg, que le roi n'etoit plus a Paris. Enfin ; certaines feuilles recueillent et propagent ces rumeurs, avec une affectation remarquable.

Le roi, M. me charge de vous prevenir de ces coupables manœuvres ; et ne doute pas, que vous ne preniez les meſures convenables, pour preſerver la capitale, des deſordres qui pourroient en etre la ſuite.

Le Miniſtre de l'Interieur

Signé

B. C. CAHIER.

The change of the word or counterſign, above noticed, was ſaid to be the deed of a corporal ; and thus ſo low an officer, had it in his power with impunity, to make the King a priſoner in his apartment for a whole night.

The reſerve of the Hotel de Ville here mentioned, is a reſerved guard of horſe, for the occaſional ſuccours of the reſt of the guards, when neceſſary.

It was evident that the projects here countermined, were the work of the partizans of liberty, or republicaniſm, in the hope of exciting the people

people to tumult. I remembered what ſome of the party had before told me *; that another ſhock was neceſſary for the ſupport of the Conſtitution, and that the Conſtitution was ſuppoſed to be finiſhed too ſoon †. I remembered their complaints, perhaps not wholly unfounded; that the Miniſters, and eſpecially the Secretary at War, were tardy, and unfit to be truſted; not taking proper meaſures to defend the nation againſt the emigrants. I remembered; that in the National Aſſembly ‡ they had perpetually alarmed the nation with rumours of war and approaching diſturbances. I conceived that they were endeavouring to accompliſh their intended commotions as ſoon as poſſible: in order both to ſtrengthen themſelves with all the expedition of which they were capable; and to have the diſturbances take place in the winter; before the Spring brought with it, any danger from the emigrants. Perhaps however, the zeal of party, had prevented their reflecting ſufficiently on the riſk of popular tumults, to whoſe fury it is ſo difficult to ſet bounds: perhaps they had too high an opinion, of their own authority over the minds of the people! but it was a laſt reſort; it had ſucceeded before, and might ſucceed now!

December

* See p. 62.

† See p. 68.

‡ See p. 54, 55.

The news ſoon arrived, that the abſolute eſcape of the King had been univerſally reported and believed amongſt the emigrants; on the Rhine, in the Low Countries, and elſewhere; even among thoſe of the higheſt claſſes; ſo long ago as the twentieth of November; he was ſaid, to be either at Valenciennes, or Aeth, or ſome place in that neigh-

December neighbourhood. The fugitive Princes had received this intelligence by expreſſes from Bruſſels; ſigned, as I underſtood, with the name of the Count of Metternich, the Miniſter of the Emperor there. Ignorant of the plans of the patriots, and judging merely from appearances; I began to ſuſpect, that the emigrants had really offered the King ſome plan of eſcape; which he had been about to adopt; and of which the patriots had profited: but that, finding himſelf daily acquiring greater weight in the opinions of his ſubjects *; he had finally rather choſen the continuance of the preſent evil; than an attempt to change, which might perhaps be for the worſe. Indeed he had every reaſon to expect, that he ſhould be worſe treated, and more enſlaved, by the emigrants, were he once completely in their power; than he then was, by the National Aſſembly: certainly the emigrants rather wiſhed him dead, than thus in the hands of the nation directed by the National Aſſembly; ſo little were they perſonally attached to the King! During his attempt to eſcape, laſt July, they had even ventured to utter this idea at Venice; where the ſmall part of the plan which belonged to the emigrants, was arranged; where it was a ſubject of converſation, ſome time before it happened; and where they were then ſo confident as to ſuppoſe it utterly impoſſible that it ſhould fail of ſucceſs; indeed they had much reaſon for their confidence! Such were my firſt conjectures, relative to this ſingular affair: but I afterwards learnt, that the ſource of the whole was nearer home!

* See p. 66 to 68.

The

The foregoing advertiſement however, had not entirely terminated the buſineſs. The evening of the firſt of December was diſtinguiſhed by a tumult in the Palais Royal, at the Caffé de Foix; whither ſeveral people had reſorted, from a coffee houſe in the place of the Feuillans; under pretence of making the keeper of the Caffé de Foix, aſk pardon, for ſome inſult, he either had offered, or was pretended to have offered, to one of the democratic party: the keeper of the coffee houſe being eſteemed an ariſtocrate. It was ſaid, that ſwords had been drawn, and piſtols preſented, on this occaſion: but a party of the national guard arrived, the coffee houſe was ſhut; and, though the croud kept about it, no other violences were committed. The keeper of the coffee houſe had not been viſible; and the aſſailants from the Feuillans, threatened loudly to return another day. I was told that there had been ſome beginnings of theſe diſturbances the evening before, the laſt of November. A ſimilar croud was likewiſe collected, round another coffee houſe, eſteemed ariſtocratic, in the Rue Neuve des petits Champs, juſt by the Palais Royal: but a guard coming thither alſo, it was ſoon diſperſed, and ſome perſons were ſaid to have been ſent to priſon. The people complained on this occaſion of the ſpeedy and haughty appearance of an armed force: "Is this our liberty?" they cried! December

The Palais Royal was ever the crater of the eruptions of liberty.

December The Pariſians, though not all well affected to the patriotic party, were yet civil enough to lay the blame of theſe tumults to the ariſtocrates. But I was now completely convinced; that they were excited entirely, by the leaders of the oppoſite ſide. It appeared to me however, to be the duty, and that it ought to have been the wiſh, of every true patriot in France; to ſtrengthen the hands of Government; without which the country ſeemed likely ſoon to become a ſcene of deſolation.

The mobs in the Palais Royal, round the Caffé de Foix, continued all the following week; under the ſame idle pretence as at the beginning: but not being found ſufficient to produce any important conſequences, they were ſuffered to ſubſide by degrees. They were evident preparations for more conſiderable tumults; which had failed to produce the expected effect. Yet even the newspapers began to expreſs the ſtate of tumult of the nation: though generally filled with mere relations of events which had happened; rather than political reaſonings on what might be in future; for the French gazettes confine themſelves to their juſt original purpoſe of daily chronicles; they ſeldom contain the homilies of ſedition; and are yet never contaminated like ours, with ſcandal and domeſtic defamation: the ſpite of individuals has not found its way into them: nor the ſmall talk of private ſocieties; nor yet the gaddings of Princeſſes and Dutcheſſes; not even a word appears in them of the rides of the King, or the parties of

the Queen, with which important intelligence, in the days of deſpotiſm, they uſed to be filled. December

I now ſoon learnt; that all this ſingular affair had originated at Paris: a ſcheme of the more violent part of the partizans of the National Aſſembly; of thoſe generally known by the title of Jacobins; as a foundation for tumults, in order to enable the Aſſembly and their party to regain the ſuperiority they were evidently loſing *. The news of the flight of the King, was ſent from Paris to the emigrants, who were civil enough to believe it, and diſpatched couriers to each other with the news, from Oſtend quite to Chambery. "It was but a ſcheme "which had failed!" as one of the democratic party obſerved to me. Some of the enemies of the Jacobins aſſured me: that the ruffians who had then juſt committed ſuch outrages and barbarities at Avignon, were all brought to Paris, for the purpoſe of ſupporting the diſturbances, which the patriots propoſed to excite: the aſſertion is probable, but I by no means am a ſufficient evidence of its truth. Subſequent events however, ſeem to have countenanced it. * See p. 66, 67.

To the ſame origin I cannot help referring, the violent inflammatory papers, exhorting even to civil war, which hung the walls of the ſtreets of Paris †: and ſeemed intended to rouſe the drooping licentiouſneſs of the people. † See p. 36.

The party at this time only repeated the practices it had executed with ſucceſs upon former occaſions. The preſent Aſſembly had loſt a large ſhare of its priſtine conſequence in the eyes of the

December nation; many cauſes ſufficient to ſatisfy ſhallow reaſoners, were aſſigned to explain this effect: they were ſaid to be people of talents inferior to the known abilities of the Members of the Conſtituent Aſſembly: it was alſo ſaid, and perhaps with much more truth, that this Aſſembly was not compoſed of perſons poſſeſſing ſo much wealth and natural conſequence in the State, as the former*. But the former Aſſembly alſo, had often been as much diſregarded by the public, had often become as inefficacious, at leaſt as this was now; they had then employed thoſe meaſures, which were attempting at preſent; to dazzle the eyes of the nation, and oblige the King to ſubmit to their will! Such were the famous affairs of July and October 1789: tumults, prepared to oblige the Government to accept and authorize the decrees of the National Aſſembly in favour of liberty: the deſtruction of the Baſtille, the conſpiracy of the military againſt the nation, were mere pretexts; and the latter, almoſt without any colour of probability; for it appears evident, that no new or immediate meaſures exiſted, even in thought, for the flight of Louis XVI. in October 1789; whatever might be pretended to the contrary. In theſe tumults, the patriots, or partizans of liberty, who prepared them; meant only to obtain by them, all that accident ſhould put in their power; without any abſolute knowledge, how far they might be led by unforeſeen circumſtances! Mirabeau, and the Orleans faction, in October 1789, probably hoped to frighten the King into flight; and then make

* See p. 56, 57.

make every poſſible advantage of ſo favourable an event: the return of the King to Verſailles, perhaps a ſufficient proof of his coolneſs and fortitude, diſconcerted their ſchemes. Farther; the partizans of the democracy, as well as the particular faction of Orleans, have ever wiſhed to be delivered from the obſtacle they have conſtantly found; in the perſon of the King and the attachment of the Nation to the Houſe of Bourbon. December

With reſpect to the intended journey of the King to St. Cloud in the Spring of 1791; I had an opportunity of acquiring ſome private information, not yet expoſed to the eye of the public. The plan for the flight of the King was then really ſettled. Fayette, it is ſaid, knew it well; and had diſpoſed the means for retaking him, at leaſt as he pretended: unleſs indeed, what is perhaps moſt probable, he acted in this affair as chief emiſſary of the violent democratic faction, who wanted to be quit of the King. The emigrants upon this occaſion, as afterwards in July *, were indiſcreet enough to expreſs their ſentiments; that they rather wiſhed the death of the King, than his remaining in the hands of the National Aſſembly: when aſked, if he was in danger of being retaken, what ſhould be done; "Alors qu'on tue le gros "Cochon!" they replied. The more moderate party, the antagoniſts of the democrates, uſing this danger of the royal perſon as an argument, wholly prevented the King's journey.

* See p. 72

As on this occaſion there was a reciprocity of projects and intentions, between the democrates, and

December and the emigrants; ſo there is the greateſt probability, that a ſimilar union of deſigns took place between them in July, and produced the eſcape of the King. The democrates wiſhed him away; becauſe they found themſelves, whilſt he remained, not ſtrong enough to annihilate as they deſired the executive power: the emigrants on the other hand wanted to have his perſon in their hands, as a Chief to their party, and an effective means of giving it all the importance it wanted. Hence the King was enabled to eſcape out of his priſon in the Tuilleries, an event which ſtill remains entirely inexplicable, even to the inhabitants of Paris themſelves! Hence he went ſo far through the kingdom without being diſcovered! Hence the emi-
* See p. 72. grants conceived themſelves, and with reaſon *, certain of the ſucceſs of the event! He was ſtopt at laſt probably; becauſe the more violent of the democrates, who wiſhed his expulſion, did not find themſelves ſufficiently ſupported, to be able to execute their ſchemes. The man who ſtopt the King, attended at the Jacobins, the evening I was there: in this ſociety he was then well received; but it was rumoured, that he was afraid to ſtay at home!

This famous flight fulfilled however, in a great degree, though not wholly, the wiſhes of the patriots. The people, ſeeing in it, merely an evidence of the King's inſincerity; became entirely
† See p. 6. their friends †. The conduct of the National Aſſembly, was directed by dignity and energy; and it hence acquired that importance, which it poſſeſſed in its latter days. The Conſtitution, ſuch

as

as we ſee it, may be ſaid to have been created by December
this event. Yet neither ſtrangers nor natives have hitherto ſeen; that it was no more than a ſucceſsful farce, exhibited by the friends of liberty: the emigrants were merely their tools on this occaſion.

The great principles of the Revolution however, were not theſe little plots of private factions. Such great effects required greater motives. The frequently celebrated political adage, of great events from little cauſes; is the bauble of narrow minds. When the miſtreſs of a King embroiled two great nations in war; when the ambition of a Miniſter rendered him the plenipotentiary of an alliance between two inveterate enemies; when the prejudices of royalty opened to a Lord the communication of the back ſtairs, and enabled him to diſplace a whole adminiſtration: each no doubt in his turn felt himſelf vain of his own talents; and reflected with pleaſure on the force of his penetration, which enabled him to ſee beyond the ignorant vulgar; how, great events flow from little, yes! from very little cauſes! But the miſtreſs did not or would not ſee; that ſhe only gave liberty to the newly irritated action of antient hat e long rooted enmity, in the nations ſhe thus nobly incited to deſtroy each other: the Miniſter did not, or would not, remember; that the balance of power being changed; through the great acceſſion of importance acquired by an iſland, once only an auxiliary; it became neceſſary to form new alliances in order to preſerve the equilibrium: and the Lord recollected not; that his influence received its conſequence,

December ſequence, from the want of truſt of the people, in the Adminiſtration he diſplaced. Little, very little cauſes indeed, may be the immediate influencing incentives of great political events: but they muſt be prepared long before, by ſome equally eſſential changes in the opinions of men: the Kings, the Lords, the Miniſters, and Miſtreſſes, who immediately execute theſe events, are merely the puppets of far mightier agents! of the will of nations! of the fiats of mankind!

The omiſſion of the conſideration of theſe great cauſes, is a frequent reaſon of political failures: whether this omiſſion be produced either by too much attachment to theoretical advantages*, to private intereſts, or to perſonal prejudices from intellectual debility. The great Stateſman and the true Philoſopher however, will never forget them: and of this truth we have perhaps the moſt brilliant example now at the helm.

* See p. 38, 46, 47, 49.

The actual Revolution of France, was in great meaſure prepared of itſelf. It was rather the diſſolution of an old, than the formation of a new Government†: the old ſyſtem being ſo entirely oppoſite to the ideas of the age, that it could no longer ſubſiſt. Hence no individual agent diſtinguiſhed himſelf: no particular people appeared poſitively to incite the change before neceſſity induced it: the intrigues of no private ambition ſeem actually to have forwarded its original exiſtence: it was the work of irreſiſtible events, and of the general ſentiments of the nation. Some of the more violent partizans of liberty have even aſſerted: that the French

† See p. 60, 61.

people

people ſhew no energy, but rather decrepit debi- December
lity, in the whole tranſaction: however it appears to me much otherwiſe. Soon indeed a party was formed from the action of the principles of the Revolution; and many concurred to promote the Change: Necker; the Martiniſts; the Free Maſons; the Clubs, and eſpecially the Jacobins; the Duke of Orleans and his clan, headed by Mirabeau! Separate factions were created; the ariſtocrates, the monarchiſts, and the partiſans of republicaniſm, appeared. Inflammatory advertiſements, and patriotic aſſociations, were employed by the intereſted to ſupport the increaſing ſpirit of innovation. The accident of the want of corn was moſt favourable to further the progreſs of diſcontent: and the leaders of the democrates purpoſely augmented, at the ſame moment that they deprecated, it. Bread alſo was publicly exhibited as the bread of the poor, far more deteſtable, even than the truth! and of this popular ſubject, the moſt extenſive advantage was made. Perhaps above all, the Jacobins moſt eſſentially contributed to the Revolution; as well by open, as by ſecret, means: and they have ever ſince endeavoured to make the moſt profitable uſe of it. They now attempted, by the meaſures, to which the advertiſement here inſerted alludes, to rouſe again, the people *: but they did not find in the Pariſians thoſe prediſpoſitions: which had given weight and conſequence to the more fortunate ringleaders of former times. Other experiments have ſince been made, and have equally

* See alſo p. 65.

December failed: through the neceſſary oppoſition of the great principles, which are inculcated in the foregoing paragraphs.

Such are the arts however, by which the people are, and muſt be, governed: the ſtate myſteries of democracy! All who are averſe to the French Conſtitution, will cry out horror againſt them; as the organizations of fraud, for the purpoſes of ſedition and barbarity! Yet could theſe critics only change their political principles, and become democrates for a moment; they would ſee in them, merely the practices neceſſary to induce the people to take poſſeſſion of their due privileges: the arts requiſite among Stateſmen! In all human tranſaction, men endeavour to deceive each other: and it is exceſs alone which makes deception an abuſe. Without theſe practices the free Conſtitution of France would never have exiſted. All human actions may equally be conſidered in a good, and in a bad, point of view; all events have their advantages and their diſadvantages: and it is from pre-eſtabliſhed maxims, or prejudices! that we judge of them. If the demagogues of France, have produced by theſe arts, a Conſtitution which will do credit to themſelves, and good to their country: if the liberty they have created, be pregnant with glory: their names alſo ſhall ſhine amid the future ſplendour of their native land! and Fayette, Bailly, and Mirabeau, be remembered, with Brutus, and Thraſybulus, and Pelopidas, and Timoleon!

The National Aſſembly, encreaſing in irritability, as it encreaſed in debility; began to exhibit violent

violent marks of peeviſhneſs and ſpleen. The December
ſeſſion of the third of December was diſtinguiſhed by a vehement attack on Monſ. Deleſſart, ex-miniſter of the home department; for neglect in publiſhing the decrees of the Aſſembly; and for making the King, in the late proclamations concerning the emigrants, employ terms cenſuring the decrees of the Aſſembly; as alſo for having ſuffered corn to be carried out of the kingdom, and not keeping the country ſufficiently provided. For theſe, apparent trifles, and vague imputations, he was violently denounced, in his character of reſponſibility as Miniſter, by Fauchet, a furious democrate, Conſtitutional Biſhop of Calvados. But it was evident that this attack, could have no material conſequences: Fauchet was treated, even in the coffee houſes, as a madman. This was manifeſtly no more than a chapter, of the hiſtory of the democratic diſſatisfaction with the Miniſters. The reſponſibility of the Miniſters to a violent democratic Aſſembly, both then, and even yet, indeed, has made their offices ſo diſagreeable; that nobody of any conſequence is found willing to accept them: the Miniſters at that time, and they are little changed ſince, were almoſt all taken from the claſs of Advocates or Counſellors; no higher rank chuſing to accept ſo much trouble, at the expence of ſo much riſk!

As the month of December advanced, the Aſſembly grew more and more tumultuous: hitherto, incomparably the moſt efficient power in the kingdom: it now ſeemed ſenſible of the loſs of its importance; and its Members began to quarrel, like loſers.

December Several ſeſſions about this period, were diſorderly beyond any former example: almoſt their whole duration was waſted in uproar, and the authority of the Preſident diſregarded. Some of the more violently democratic Members, aſſerted in private; that a diviſion of the kingdom was become probable, if not neceſſary: the ſouthern parts, the moſt zealous for liberty, being ready to form themſelves into a republic, or republican Conſtitution: Britany, Poitou, and the neighbouring provinces, perhaps into a monarchy, as being the parts of France, eſteemed the moſt ariſtocratic. New complaints were exhibited every day againſt the Miniſters; for omiſſions in publiſhing the decrees of the Aſſembly; and repeated denunciations on this account, were received from the diſtricts: the moſt ſevere remonſtrances were eſpecially made, relative to the decree for the diſtribution of the contributions; certainly the foundation of regular finance, a branch of Government now ſo much diſordered in this country. The Miniſter, however, afterwards proved; that the appearance of negligence thus harſhly cenſured; proceeded wholly from the delay abſolutely neceſſary, for printing the multitude of laws, emanated from the late Aſſembly, towards its concluſion. I doubt not however; that the Miniſters of the executive power, were ready to lay any impediments they might be able eaſily to invent, before the courſe of the National Aſſembly.

The proſpect of war now becoming obvious; the democrates, and thoſe even of the higher ranks, poſitively, though privately, aſſerted; that if the King

King declared in favour of the war againſt the emigrants and their ſupporters: his declaration would be the ſignal for pillage: and that no civil officers, no national guards, would be found ſufficient to prevent the houſe of every gentleman in the kingdom from falling a prey to the depredations of the mob. I fancy the democrates had uniformly too exceſſive a confidence, in the attachment of the populace. December

The middle of December was ſignalized by a new exertion of the royal veto. A decree having paſſed the Aſſembly, againſt the Prieſts promoting diſſentions; which was principally aimed againſt the nonconformiſt Clergy; about whom there were then many tumults, in various parts of the kingdom: the King thought proper to refuſe his conſent to it. Without regarding the merits of the decree; it was evident, that there was, as I have already remarked *, an exorbitant tendency, in the executive and legiſlative powers, to counteract each other: and ſince, as long as this tendency exiſted, no effective Government could exiſt with it; it was neceſſary that one ſhould gain the advantage, or civil war enſue.

* See p. 67.

And one did gain the advantage! It was evident that the King; not indeed as deſpot, not as the friend of the emigrants, but as the great executive power nominated in the Conſtitution; obtained every day new weight and influence in the opinion of the people! The emigrants gained little; the old ſyſtem became hence, even ſtill leſs, likely to be reeſtabliſhed: but the power of the

Monarch,

December Monarch, as acquired by a favourable interpretation of the Conſtitution, grew conſtantly more and more important. Indeed; though I have frequently heard the conduct of the preſent Aſſembly, and the meaſures of the preſent ſyſtem, moſt ſeverely reprobated in France: yet it is a memorable truth, that I never heard any perſon, of any party, venture to vilify the Conſtitution! So far at leaſt, the French were ſtill unanimous againſt the emigrants. But the nation, ſatisfied with the privileges obtained, now ſeemed willing to abandon to the King, the exerciſe of every prerogative, which the Conſtitution he had accepted, could be ſuppoſed to have left him. The antient prejudices of the nation in favour of the royal houſe, appeared to revive: and the people ſeemed averſe to the idea of hazarding the advantages acquired, and the peace of poſſeſſion, in order to go in ſearch of glittering ſhadows. Now it is a fundamental maxim of the philoſophy of Government; that all power is finally from the people, and the opinion of the people. The importance of human opinion, has not yet been fully known: it has been ſaid, that the old Papal authority, as contraſted to the Regal, was founded in opinion! but the power of Nadir Shah, or of Frederic II. after the battle of Roſbach, were as much founded in opinion, as that of Gregory VII. or Innocent III.: the authority of theſe Popes was acknowledged, becauſe the zealots of the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, expected to obtain from it, eternal ſalvation! So the authority of the Monarchs at the head of their troops

troops was acknowledged, becauſe their followers, December
beli ved it to be the means of their temporal ſalvation! Thus alſo there is no Government, wherein the will and opinion of the majority is not the abſolute ſource of all power*: the people may be diſpleaſed, and not think the diſguſt deſerves the riſk of reſiſtance; a caſe which happens almoſt every day; but when they do reſiſt, all oppoſition falls before them! Nor is there any caſe in which this truth does not apply: except when a nation is overawed by an armed force, which it believes itſelf unable to oppoſe: but this is a ſtate of violence that cannot remain long: as long as it does remain however, it is moſt enervating and deſtructive. Even in ſettled military Governments; it is merely the diſpoſition of the people to acquieſce, which ſtrengthens the hands of the ſoldiery. Our patriotic writers have trifled with the underſtanding of mankind; they have endeavoured to perſuade us, that only democratic Governments emanate from the people: but they have been deceived themſelves, or have endeavoured to deceive others; for finally, all authority ſprings from the acquieſcence of the people; the people is the ſole ſource of dominion; and the will of the majority, ruleth for ever!

* See p. 79 to 82.

The King was now profiting by the ſupport which was hence afforded him: and as the will of the people muſt be the moſt powerful, when its acquieſcence is the leaſt; ſo their good opinion muſt be moſt beneficial, in tumultuous times. It was the ſenſe of this ſupport, which enabled him

to

December to hazard and maintain his firſt veto to the decree againſt the emigrants. He was now endeavouring to obtain by it, every advantage, of which he ſhould find it capable. Some Chief had been wanting to guide and direct the Revolution *, and the King was become that Chief, by the election of his people. The defeat of the attempts of the democrates to excite troubles, like every other abortive conſpiracy againſt a ruling power, had eſſentially ſtrengthened their antagoniſt, the Crown; it was perhaps the firſt regular attempt of the ſort ſince the Revolution, which had failed through the abſolute debility of the patriotic party. The King alſo endeavoured to diminiſh the objects of jealouſy by removing thoſe Miniſters who had been moſt offenſive to the people.

* See p. 62.

The event however, of theſe diſpoſitions, muſt be favourable to peace: it was a return from a ſyſtem of change and revolution, to the old ſyſtem of peaceful government: an effective power was created, capable of directing the State; and nothing but the obſtinate and probably fruitleſs ſtruggles of the National Aſſembly could be expected to produce future diſturbance. I now began to ſee, that the Conſtitution might perhaps be ſettled without new troubles, or at leaſt without civil war. Concord and tranquillity are ſo greatly the intereſt of the multitude, that no trifling cauſe will induce it to hazard confuſion: how much ſoever the hirelings of Kings may vilify the character of their ſubjects. I ſeemed to have arrived at Paris, in a moment of criſis; when the

ſpirit of tumult was ſtruggling with the love of peace and order: the conteſt had terminated in favour of the latter. December

Theſe were the reflexions I made from the political phenomena which then lay within the ſphere of my obſervation at Paris: but how far the intereſts of concord and harmony might be equally prevalent in the reſt of the kingdom, and in the ſouthern parts eſpecially, I was not ſo well able to judge. I had indeed been informed, as is already mentioned*; that the South was highly diſſatisfied: but I ſuſpect my informer to have been prejudiced: and certainly Paris, hitherto the birth-place of liberty, did not ſeem likely to produce any new material diſturbances. I believe alſo that the provinces in general were ſtill ready to follow her example. * See p. 84.

This ſtate of affairs was highly unfavourable to the emigrants: both as preventing internal commotions; and as evidently ſeparating the intereſt of the King, from theirs. It could be no longer the wiſh of Louis XVI. to reſign himſelf into their hands; but rather to endeavour to regain the loſt prerogatives of his Crown, by oppoſing their party to that of the National Aſſembly, and maintaining the balance between both. For the experience of former ages has proved; that the ariſtocracy is not naturally more favourable to the intereſts of Kings, than the democracy: though accident has now united the intereſts of the French Nobles to thoſe of their Sovereign. His Gallic Majeſty is indeed not diſtinguiſhed by any large portion of in-

December tellectual abilities; yet the wiſeſt of mankind could not have conducted himſelf with more prudence, amid the tumults of France, than Louis XVI. has done; yielding to invincible circumſtances, when reſiſtance could only have produced unavailing bloodſhed; profiting by every advantage, which the goodwill of his people afforded him; he has guided the royal houſe through greater perils than any to which it has been expoſed ſince the era of the league; or the days of Iſabel of Bavaria. If, as it is probable, the honour of this conduct be due to the Queen; her name certainly deſerves to be recorded among thoſe which do moſt honour to her ſex: after having purged herſelf of any former errors, by the ſevere penance of agonizing adverſity; ſhe has riſen, like her Mother, greater from diſtreſs; and brought herſelf and her family, ſafe through every danger; to the proſpect of greater glory perhaps, than ever they have known before!

The National Aſſembly, or its more violent Members, however; ſtill diſſatisfied with the loſs of influence; ſtrained every nerve to regain it; and they have continued to do ſo even till now! On the twentieth of December, one Delcher, a violent democrate, dared to make a motion in the Aſſembly propoſing an abſolute appeal to the people, relative to the exerciſe of the royal veto: or in other words, endeavoured to overturn the preſent Conſtitution; to throw all anew into confuſion; and thus deſtroy, or greatly diminiſh, the authority given by the preſent organization, to the

execu-

executive power; leaving the National Aſſembly abſolute ſovereign; and rendering the Government wholly republican! This ſerved to explain, the expreſſion which had been uſed to me; that the Conſtitution was ſuppoſed to be finiſhed too ſoon, that it was ſtill incomplete and wanted perfection *. But the National Aſſembly was too prudent to adopt ſo extravagant a meaſure: and the patriots now had no other reſource, than to endeavour to explain the preſent Conſtitution, as unfavourably to the Crown as poſſible; ſo that its regulations might reſtrain the regal authority within the narroweſt bounds; and ſerve at the ſame time to increaſe that of the Aſſembly; juſt as the Crown endeavours to inculcate, an oppoſite ſignification. I ſuſpect that the tardineſs of the Aſſembly in the arrangement of their finances, aroſe from a ſimilar deſire to embarraſs the executive power; and render it if poſſible dependent on the Aſſembly; by the ſame means which are theoretically ſuppoſed to enable our Parliament to force the Monarchs of England to ſubmit to their will; through the refuſal of the mutiny or money bills! The tardineſs and renitency of the Aſſembly on this buſineſs, was manifeſt: for though it had expreſsly ordered that certain days ſhould be appropriated for the purpoſe of tranſacting it †, the order was by no means executed; ſo that even its own Members reprobated the neglect: the Miniſters were accuſed of negligence indeed ‡ relative to this affair; but it was merely in conſequence, I believe, of the popularity of this ſubject of complaint.

December

* See p. 68, 71.

† See p. 58.

‡ See p. 83, 84.

December Since the partiſans of the Aſſembly have thus found themſelves unable to regain their loſt influence, by tumultuous expedients: they would perhaps ſhow greater wiſdom could they induce the Aſſembly to ſignalize itſelf by its attention to the public weal; and the adoption of meaſures of Adminiſtration, eſſentially beneficial to the kingdom; among the firſt of which, may be ranked the regulation of the finances; ſaid, even by themſelves, to need nothing more than good order to be duly col-
* See p. 59. lected *. As long as they continue thus, bickering with the executive power; they evidently cannot be of much ſervice to the nation; and are probably at the ſame time, injuring themſelves.

Imminent neceſſity however, obliged the Aſſembly about this time to order a new emiſſion of aſſig-
† See p. 58 nats †, and to propoſe to iſſue them even for much leſs than the ſum of five livres, which was before, their ſmalleſt value. This was indeed merely a temporary aid, like others of the ſame ſort: but perhaps the time obtained by the emiſſion, may hereafter enable them radically to cure the eſſential defects of the finances. It was evident however, that the continuance of theſe emiſſions, muſt eſſentially lower the value of the paper money, by increaſing its quantity: eſpecially if no ſettlement were made with the emigrants, which indeed was not improbably to be expected in the Spring: but if no ſuch event happened; the fall of value ſeemed likely to be ſufficient, materially to affect the value of commodities when paid in aſſignats. The premium

upon paper continued to encreaſe greatly, during December
all the month of December.

The preſent danger of the nation was now repeated every moment in the Aſſembly. Its members exclaimed: that the enemies of the Conſtitution, within; and the emigrants, without; were playing into the hands of each other! that the ſtandard of the latter was almoſt raiſed, in ſome of the provinces of the kingdom, and eſpecially in Poitou! They daily alarmed the public with the accounts of ſome new plan of ſeduction, diſpoſed by the emigrants within the kingdom! I have already had occaſion to notice, one of their ſittings upon a buſineſs of this ſort * as being ſingular for its duration; it continued from five at night, till ſeven in the morning; and was employed in an examination of perſons, within their own diſtrict, ſeized on ſuſpicion of recruiting for the emigrants. It was aſſerted in the Aſſembly at the ſame time; that ſimilar recruiting parties, were diſperſed all over the kingdom! On the twentieth of December, notice was given in the Aſſembly; that the houſe appointed for the conſtitutional meetings of a department in Auvergne, had been burnt by diſcontented perſons. Every day ſome new circumſtance or other of this ſort was produced. The Aſſembly now told their countrymen; that their means of defence would not be found equal to what was ſuppoſed; though their orators had formerly ſo much boaſted of the reſources of France †: it lamented likewiſe, and perhaps not wholly without foundation, that the Conſtitution was eſſentially

* See p. 55, 56.

† See p. 54, 55.

in

December in danger; but I doubt whether the meaſures purſued, were the beſt adapted to prevent the conſequences of this danger. The increaſing influence of the King, certainly verges towards the deſpotiſm of the old ſyſtem: there is no preſent probability however, of its abſolute re-eſtabliſhment.

That there were tumults, and partial diſcontents in the provinces, it is impoſſible to doubt: but they had not perhaps, all the importance, which the National Aſſembly ſeemed willing to pretend. They were much more likely, it is true, to ſubſiſt in the provinces, than at Paris *. Indeed, if diſturbances ſhould happen, it appeared to me, that the nation might expect one of its moſt efficient ſupports from the metropolis. The national guard of Paris; conſiſting of forty-eight thouſand men, a thouſand for each of the forty-eight diſtricts into which that city is divided; better diſciplined by far than any ſimilar body in France, and likely to be reinforced by a number of citizens not actually enrolled, but who have participated of the military training; excluſive of many more, who may join theſe in caſe of action: muſt neceſſarily be of great importance, to produce victory, and perhaps order, in any future troubles: the conſequence of ſuch a body, thus collected on one ſpot, muſt be enormous! No other part of the kingdom, could offer any counterpoiſe. It reminded me of the Train Bands of London; which, though a body of no more than twelve thouſand men, in every reſpect inferior; yet proved the ſafety of the Parliament, in the time of Charles I.

* See p. 40, 41, 88, 89.

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The Aſſembly was engaged about this time alſo, December
in the formation of the national Juries; and of the high national Court of Judicature at Orleans, for the trial of treaſonable offences. As the royal veto had prevented the completion of the deſigns of the Aſſembly againſt the emigrants *: I was convinced that it was now intended, to accuſe at leaſt their Chiefs before this Court, as ſoon as it ſhould be formed: provided indeed, the partiſans of republicaniſm, did not too eſſentially loſe their influence before that time, a circumſtance which then appeared to me not wholly impoſſible. The Aſſembly has ſince preſented its accuſation; yet marked I think with the ſigns of that increaſing weakneſs, which I had ſeemed to perceive, in its influence: had it been in the ſplendour of its power, very many more would have been united in the ſame accuſation. However, if not fruſtrated, this impeachment may perhaps even yet put an end to the emigration.

* See p. 44, 52, 53.

On the evening of the thirteenth of December, I attended at one of the many theatres lately opened in Paris, where an opera was given, called, Nicodeme dans la Lune, which I found to be a repreſentation of the French Revolution: Nicodemus, being tranſported into the Moon in a balloon, finds its inhabitants in the ſituation of complaint which prevailed in France before the Revolution; he arranges every thing there, juſt after the model of France, except that the Emperor of the Moon, effects the whole in good degree by his own authority; whereas Louis XVI. was forced to ſubmit to

the

December the authority of others. They had found an actor, ſingularly reſembling what Louis XVI. was, ſome few years ago; to whom they gave the part of Emperor of the Moon, I could not hear without ſurprize; how much was ſaid in it in favour, of the equality of men, and of the levelling principle: I knew indeed, that this had been
* See p. 41. the cant of the Revolution *; but as it is now nearly forgotten, its novelty and exceſs aſtoniſhed me. This opera was one of the many arts practiſed
† See p. 81. 82. to ſupport the ſpirit of Revolution †. The theatre is ſituated in the Rue Bondy: and ſeems to be one of the engines of the democracy.

The King conſiderably confirmed his popularity, by expreſſing his intention to ſupport the Conſtitution, againſt the emigrants, and againſt all its enemies, even by arms if neceſſary; when he viſited the National Aſſembly, towards the middle of December: for the nation, as I have already re-
‡ See p. 86. marked ‡, was friendly to the Conſtitution, and averſe to the emigrants. But he riſked little by this declaration: he muſt have been a very impotent political reaſoner, not to have felt; that arms were little to be apprehended.

The rumours of the interference of Ruſſia in the
‖ See p. 22. affairs of France, were renewed about this time ‖; but of all the pretexts of the ſort, which have been invented either to conceal the want of ſupport, or hide the ſource from whence it flowed, this ſeems the moſt abſurd. Ruſſia, remote in her ſituation, and already embarraſſed in her finances; could have no intereſt in the reſtoration of the French

Nobles

Nobles to their eſtates; unleſs ſhe had formed de- December
ſigns far more profound, and which all Europe muſt be intereſted to repreſs, as they muſt be dangerous to the peace of the whole weſtern world: ſhe could not expect, with impunity, to obtain an influence certainly undue, and ſo very diſtant from her own confines!

The King of Sweden indeed, himſelf a diſciple of Vergennes, and inſtigated by his condiſciples, might with more reaſon be expected by the emigrants to aſſiſt them. But what is a King of Sweden, though the Don Quixote of the ariſtocracy? And even at this very moment, he received the letter of the French King notifying his acceptance of the Conſtitution: the reception of which he had long endeavoured to avoid.

It is certainly remarkable, that I found a conſiderable quantity of Swediſh halfpence current at Paris whilſt I was there; though comparatively few, even of the copper coin of the country itſelf, were to be ſeen. Had this phenomenon appeared at Coblentz, it would not have been ſurprizing; ſince the King of Sweden oſtenſibly aſſiſts the emigrants, and ſends them money: but what could bring theſe halfpence to Paris? Surely the King of the French could not condeſcend to receive halfpenny aid from his brother of Sweden!

Spain was far too diſſatisfied at home, to riſk foreign war: her Sovereign was too much afraid of his own ſubjects, to quarrel with thoſe of other Princes.

December The petty tyrants of Germany were already ſo much alarmed; that the Elector of Treves thought proper to diſcourage the preparations of the emigrants, even before complaint was made to him: they dreaded France, they dreaded even their own ſubjects; and already dreamed that all the ſixteen quarters of their nobility were attainted. Their conduct ſince, prompt and even precipitate, has clearly manifeſted their ſentiments.

The political œconomy of the Emperor; and of the King of Pruſſia, in aſſociation with him; has been a perpetual ſeries of duplicity: manifeſting however from the beginning a ſettled reſolution not to aſſiſt the emigrants; whom they have thought proper to make their dupes. In the firſt manifeſto from Pilnitz: the Emperor and King promiſed to aſſiſt the emigrants, provided they could unite all the Sovereigns in one league againſt their enemies! At the latter end of December, the Emperor diſpatched a manifeſto into France from the Diet of Ratiſbon; wherein he threatened to make war upon that nation, in order to ſupport the feudal rights of the German Princes in Alſace and Lorraine, according to the decrees of the Diet of the empire; provided theſe diſputed rights could not be ſettled without war! At the beginning of January, another manifeſto from him appeared, wherein he tells the French; that if they attack the Elector of Treves, he as Emperor, muſt defend him; though at the ſame moment, the Elector of Treves, was anxiouſly removing every cauſe of complaint, for which the French had threatened to attack him!

I pretend not to ſay, that the conduct of the Em- December
peror does not bear ſome marks of diſſention in his own Cabinet; but it rather indicates concealed deſigns, and the inſinuations probably, of the Councils of his ſiſter. The moſt decided proof of his ſentiments, is the poſitive declaration of the King of France, on his viſit to the National Aſſembly; who aſſerted, that the Emperor had abſolutely promiſed not to eſpouſe the cauſe of the emigrants! But indeed war with France is too evidently contrary to the character and firſt intereſts of the Emperor, to leave any ſuppoſition even of its poſſibility, in an impartial mind; the Emperor knows too well the ſituation of the Low Countries, to hazard it: he knows that they would be inſtantly in arms againſt him; and he muſt remember, that he has even juſt now given them, freſh motives of diſguſt; ſo that they are every day taking refuge on the territory of France. What may be his peculiar reaſon for the mode of conduct he has choſen to purſue, time will probably diſcover; if indeed it has not already in ſome degree ſhown us: ſince theſe meaſures have already enabled him, to cover with his troops, all that part of Germany, which borders on the Low Countries; and he ſeems only to wait for the excuſe, to garriſon the Archbiſhopric of Treves in the ſame manner. I ſuſpect that the intereſt of the emigrants, is conjunctively intended as a veil, to conceal the reduction of Germany; which country, the Emperor and the King of Pruſſia ſeem deſirous to divide between them. The negotiations about the Crown of Po-

December land, form alſo a part of the ſame ſyſtem. The ſucceſs of theſe deſigns, by quaſhing the ſlave merchants, who now tyrannize over Germany, would perhaps be advantageous to the human race.

The manifeſt incapacity of the emigrants in themſelves, I have already * had occaſion to diſcuſs.

* See p. 25, 26, 37.

With whom then was France to make war? Ruſſia was too remote and too embarraſſed, Sweden too weak, Spain too much diſcontented at home, the Princes of Germany were unequal to the conteſt, and the Emperor riſked too much, without any proſpect of advantage! Would ſhe fight with the Pope and his Cardinals? In general: it was the intereſt of no power in Europe, to put France in a ſtate of foreign war: but rather to foment her internal confuſion, and leave her at peace from without. The emigrants therefore, though the natural favourites of Kings; yet had no probability of finding any one Sovereign willing to fight for them.

The National Aſſembly, however, thought proper to continue its pretence of war †, which it ſeemed to hope would alarm the Nation, and rouſe it in their favour: but the Aſſembly was very conſcious that actual war, would be contrary to its real intereſts, as being calculated to ſtrengthen its antagoniſt, the executive power. Hence it was careful to avoid any real motive of diſſenſion with the Emperor, even at the moment it ſeemed moſt violent againſt him. Some of the diſcontented Flemings, perhaps the ſame who had offered to

† See p. 54, 55, 93, 94.

ſupport

ſupport the French Revolution * having retired to Liſle: the National Aſſembly immediately forbid, their attempting any military preparations, and even their abiding in the frontier towns: ſo cautious was it, of giving umbrage to the Emperor. Hence alſo, they were almoſt as much diſſatisfied; when the King declared in favour of war in ſupport of the Conſtitution; as when he gave his veto to the decree againſt the emigrants. But the French were ſtill blinded, by the noiſy fictions of its leading partiſans. December * See p. 64.

The royal adoption of the military ſyſtem, not only confirmed the popularity of the King, as I have already remarked; but it beguiled the National Aſſembly of the ſyſtem it had adopted; and put all its advantages for the moment into the hands of the King; whoſe real intereſt is war: for of all theſe bluſtering champions; war is not the intereſt, and conſequently cannot be the with, of any, except Louis XVI. and the emigrants!

Such being the ſtate of France; the danger of the Conſtitution ſeemed to reſult; from the encroachments of the executive power, encouraged by the acquieſcence of the nation which appeared reſolved to recompenſe by its moderation, the exceſſes of the National Aſſembly †. I have already noticed, how much this peril is increaſed by the enormous income of the King of the French ‡, which perhaps renders it probable, that their boaſted Conſtitution will hereafter be like our own; neither democratic, ariſtocratic, nor monarchic; but the government of venality! † See p. 38, 49, 85, 86, 87, 88. ‡ See p. 57.

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December The laſt evening of my ſtay in Paris, I went to the opera; and unexpectedly found the Queen and Dauphin alſo there. The applauſes beſtowed on them, eſpecially upon the Queen, were carried even to extravagance *; and they were not confined merely to their entrance, but repeated at every interval of the repreſentation; and redoubled; when any circumſtance on the ſtage, could be favourably applied to the royal ſituation.

* See p. 66, 67.

The value of aſſignats continued to decline during all my reſidence in France; ſo that the premium was thirty in the hundred at the end of December; and it has alſo greatly augmented ſince. But this decline, though great and ſtriking, does not bring all the evil with it, which may at firſt be ſuppoſed. The example of America, whoſe paper money became not worth a hundredth part of its original value, is a demonſtration drawn from the beſt evidence, that of experience, how much may be ſuffered in this reſpect. The decline of the value of aſſignats may embarraſs the government, but cannot ruin the nation; for the value of the paper money may fall almoſt to nothing; and yet the nation increaſe in real wealth at the ſame time, as it actually does, I believe, at preſent. The decline of the moment is owing to cauſes merely temporary: ſuch as the appearances of war or diſturbances, and the neceſſity of increaſing the actual quantity of aſſignats: but the funds mortgaged for them, the national domains, are far more than ſufficient to anſwer all the preſent claims upon them, excluſive of the other reſources of the nation †. If the

† See p. 58.

finances

finances be as eaſily capable of regulation as it is pretended *; their good order will ſoon raiſe the price of aſſignats. December

* See p. 59.

Commerce greatly revived in France, juſt before I quitted the country: the workmen were all employed, and conſequently leſs inclined to be tumultuous. I have already noticed the complaints of the decline of commerce †, which I had heard on my entrance into France; and with which this circumſtance ſeems not eaſily to accord. But both the decline and the revival may have owed their common origin to the effects of the paper money. The cauſe of the evil effects of paper money on internal commerce, I have already in ſome degree explained ‡: it is the uncertainty of the value of the common ſtandard of traffic. But this very uncertainty becomes afterwards favourable to foreign commerce; when the value of the paper money is fallen greatly below the common value of the ſtandard of traffic among other nations: becauſe then the foreigner is enabled to buy the productions of the nation uſing paper money; for much leſs of his own ſtandard of traffic than uſual; and conſequently he inſtantly purchaſes all he is able of its commodities. Thus trade revives from the ſame cauſe which had before made it decline: and paper money, which injures internal, is favourable to foreign, commerce.

† See p. 35, 41, 42.

‡ See p. 41, 42.

Though all my own concluſions tended to confirm the proſpect of tranquillity in France; yet the warmer democrates aſſured me in private, even juſt before I left it; that the nation would hereafter

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December be expoſéd to the moſt violent ſeditions; repeating alſo the probability, even of the ſeparation of the kingdom; and hinting even the chimerical project ſince publicly emanated from violence and faction, of creating a Prince of England Sovereign of the ariſtocratic part of France *. But I own the teſtimony of theſe enthuſiaſts appeared to me partial, as founded on an exceſſive confidence in the inclinations of the people to ſupport their attempts to retrench the power of the Crown, agreeably to what has already been obſerved †: now as I was induced by various reaſons, to eſteem the inclinations of the people, very uncertain; and as the failure of the democratic plans to raiſe troubles, ſeemed to demonſtrate a diminution of that influence: perhaps theſe poſitive aſſertions on the ſubject, may not deſerve ſo much attention. I ſaw however too little of the kingdom, to be able, poſitively, to contradict them.

* See p. 84.

† See p. 85.

I returned from Paris to England, by the uſual road, through Calais: the laſt time of my paſſing through this tract of country, was about eight years before the preſent epocha. I did not ſeem to find on this journey, quite ſo many marks of improvement, as on thoſe which I had made through France in other directions. However the cultivation was evidently meliorated and augmented: the people had not ſo much the mien of oppreſſed poverty as they had had formerly; and ſome cottages and farm houſes were building in different places. As to the political propenſities of this diſtrict: the neighbourhood of Paris participates of the character of the metro-

metropolis: Picardy ſeems to be partial to patri- December
otiſm; Amiens, its capital, abounds with inſcriptions in honour and ſupport of the Conſtitution, which is there called, the Wonder of Nations, and the glory of the earth! the Boulognois, and the neighbourhood of Calais, are more ariſtocratic; even the aſſignats ſcarcely find credit at Boulogne. The fundamental principles of democracy, were however in violent effervescence, at no great diſtance from Calais: St. Omar was at that very moment in a ſtate of conſiderable tumult; on account of an intended exportation of corn; deſigned, as it was ſaid, for the ſouthern provinces of France, where a bad harveſt has produced ſcarcity. But the people, headed by the women, roſe, and ſtopped the exportation: aſſigning as their motive; that if they permitted the corn to go out of their power, they had no ſecurity to enſure them, that it ſhould be applied to the uſe of their ſouthern fellow citizens, rather than carried, as intereſt might command, to ſome foreign market: they therefore refuſed to ſuffer its removal. The women, as it is ſaid, armed with muſkets, acted more bravely, as well as more violently, than men themſelves. However, the national guard of the place, ſtrengthened by that of the neighbourhood, ſoon reſtored peace; but I know not, whether the corn was finally permitted to be exported.

On my paſſage to England I was accompanied among other, by a Swiſs of Vevay; from whom I learnt, that the inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud,

December regard the ariſtocracy of Bern in the ſame invidious light, that the French regarded, and ſtill regard, the old ariſtocracy of France: complaining equally of impoſitions and oppreſſion, and of being governed without their own conſent. They threaten, and perhaps not wholly in vain, that they will hereafter force the Berneſe to do them juſtice! He aſſured me; that Bern had rendered the caſtle of Chillon, an actual Baſtille; wherein thoſe who diſpleaſed the Government were confined by orders as arbitrary, as the French Lettres de Cachêt. The arm of authority is now ſupported by military force: but how long this ſtate of violence may be able to ſubſiſt, he eſteemed very uncertain. He aſſerted, that the inhabitants ardently deſired to be united to France. That the ſpirit of Revolution is epidemic, is a truth which every one knows, and which Sovereigns anxiouſly dread: but we have no example in the modern world of any Government to which ſtrangers have thus expreſſed a voluntary deſire to be united, except that of France; whereas we ourſelves have ſeen, various inſtances of ſubjects, on the contrary, who have wiſhed to be delivered from their Oppreſſors. Many of the Geneveſe have alſo manifeſted the ſame deſire of an union with France. In the hiſtories of antiquity we read, of nations voluntarily aſſociating themſelves to the Government of Rome; but it was perhaps rather her power, than the juſtice of her laws, which induced them. The hiſtory of China may afford examples ſimilar; though hitherto unparallelled in the reſt of the world.

I was

I was ſorry to experience, on my return to my native ſhore, far greater inconvenience and trouble, from the arrogance and impertinence of the cuſtom houſe at Dover, than any that I had ever encountered abroad, even in a land of tumult. The exceſs of ſmuggling is the pretence for it: but it is wholly and completely inadequate to the prevention intended: whilſt it ſubjects the unintereſted traveller, to the greateſt perplexities: his perſon is rudely treated and inſulted; his baggage is careleſsly diſturbed and injured; his time unjuſtly uſurped; and his expences conſequently increaſed, only to procure himſelf uneaſineſs. Nor do his torments finiſh at Dover; but even as far as the very gates of London; he is ſubject to the inſulting reſearches of theſe officers of the cuſtoms! I truſt the ſtate of theſe things is now ſo deteſtable, as to be arrived at the utmoſt exceſs; in future it can only amend! If it be the deſign of the Government of England, to render our iſland the emblem of inhoſpitality, to obtain it the hatred of all nations, they have ſucceeded to their wiſhes. None but the Barbarians who inhabit the ſands of Northern Germany have ever dared to treat ſtrangers in this manner; and even they have not ventured to carry their behaviour to ſuch perſonal exceſs: ſo that even the female ſex is expoſed to the rudeſt reſearches worthy only the ruffians who pillage the wrecks on the coaſt of Cornwall. December

Finally, the propenſity to change, is a fundamental and irrevocable law; of the moral and the intellectual world; of all that is connected with

December ſpace and time: the productions of nature, the works of men; our notions and our manners all are alike ſubject to mutation: and as our notions and our manners change, ſo muſt our laws and ſyſtems of government change with them *. Can thoſe men who oppoſe, and cenſure the new conſtitution of France, be ignorant of theſe eſſential truths? or can they ſuppoſe, that an heterogeneous compromiſe, between abſolute inſtitutions and modern cuſtoms, is better than a new regulation, conformable to the new ideas and prejudices? or do they rather think their futile reaſonings ſufficient to control the laws of nature, and give immutability to our inconſtant ſyſtem of being? I pretend not to attribute abſolute excellence to the French Conſtitution; but occaſional propriety: abſolute excellence is merely a fable to amuſe the ignorant. Hereafter new nations and theoriſts ſhall ariſe, alike pretending to newly diſcovered perfection; and ſyſtems free from defect: their bubble alſo ſhall laſt for a moment, till it burſt and make room for more: and the vain pageant ſhall ſerve to amuſe the infant we call man through all the ages of its exiſtence.

* See p. 79, 80.

That the eighteenth century, has been the age of events, ſo great as almoſt to eclipſe the hiſtory of former days, is a truth of daily obſervation: and we may juſtly boaſt; that our own iſland, has cauſed, or principally contributed to cauſe, the moſt important of them. If the riſe of Ruſſia and Pruſſia, be not immediately our work: the civilized eſtabliſhment and final liberation of America,

the conqueſt of a great part of India; the foun- Deeember
dation of an Engliſh colony on the burning coaſts of Africa, and even among our wild Antipodes in New Holland; the diminution and probable extinction of ſlavery among Europeans: are events in which we have had the greateſt ſhare! Even the Revolution of France, of all the events, perhaps the moſt ſingular, takes its diſtant ſource from the example of our own in the laſt age; for we ſeem at preſent, to be the great moving ſoul of the world! But I look forward to the poſſibility of ſtill more wonders: perhaps another half century may ſee the Turks baniſhed out of Europe; Germany divided between Pruſſia and Auſtria; and the Low Countries united to France! Perhaps alſo Mexico and Peru, may be enlightened from Boſton and Philadelphia! I ſee a canal navigable for ſhipping of any ſize, opened acroſs the Iſthmus of Darien! I ſee mountains pierced with rivers, and ramparts dividing the ocean: I ſee in proſpect, the whole world, remoulded, transformed, and ruled, by European hands and minds: for our quarter of the earth is again in its aſcendant! Theſe things may now ſeem viſions; but, perhaps a ſhorter period than cooler reaſon may expect, will give them being!

The

March. The death of the Emperor, which has juſt taken place, whilſt theſe ſheets were completing, will alter in ſome ſmall degree, the political conſequences to be deduced from the foregoing Obſervations: the influence of the Queen of France in the Cabinet of Vienna, will probably be rather diminiſhed, now that ſhe has a nephew inſtead of a brother at the head of it. The deſigns of Auſtria and Pruſſia, on the reſt of Germany, muſt be deranged by this accident *. But I am inclined to believe, that the great outlines of the late ſyſtem, will remain to be purſued: the illuſtrious Prince Kaunitz, is ſtill the ſoul of Auſtrian policy. In France, the ſouthern provinces ſeem to have confirmed, the greater ſtate of uneaſineſs and trouble attributed to them † in the preceding pages.

* See p. 99, 100.

† See p. 84, 89, 94, 104.

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THE END.